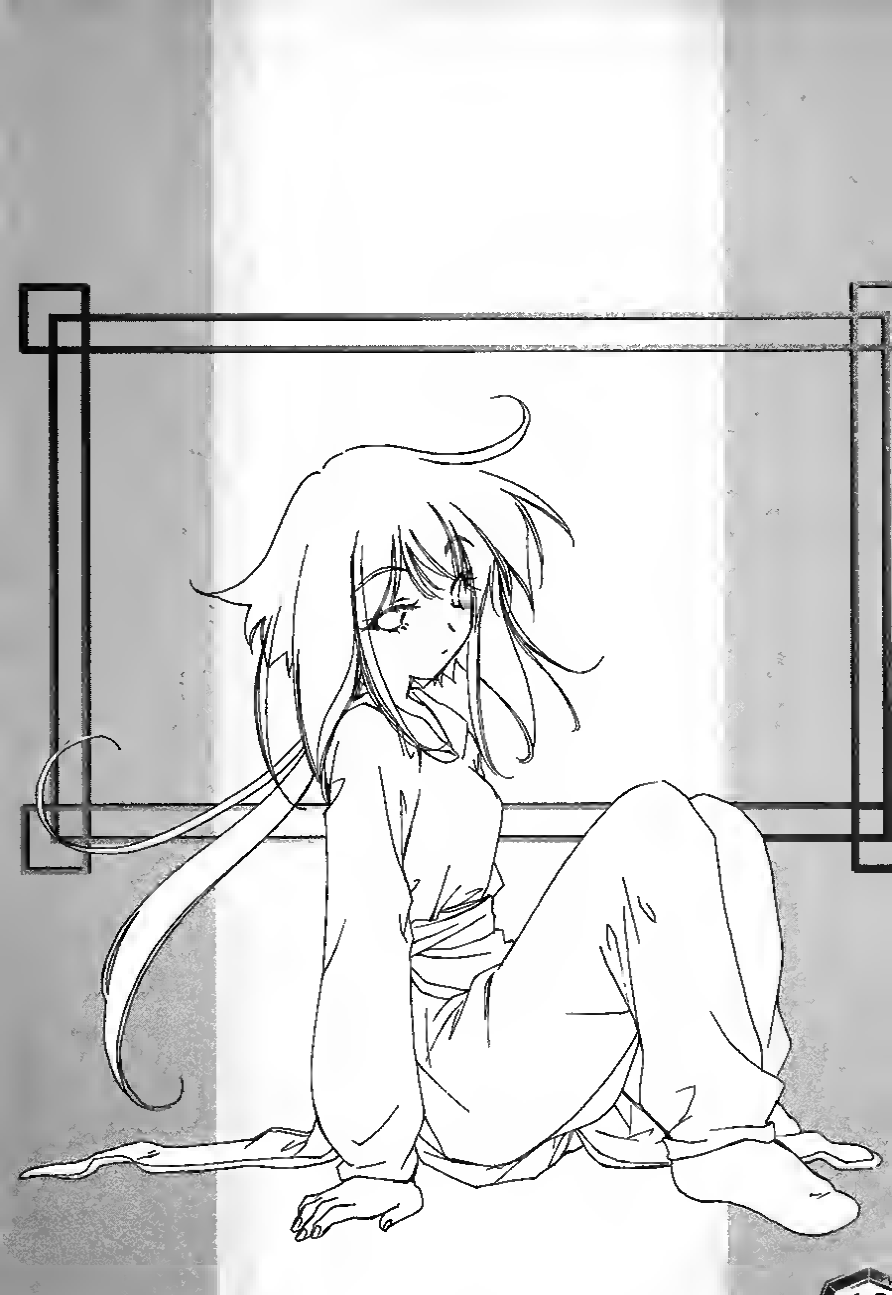

Minene Sakurano

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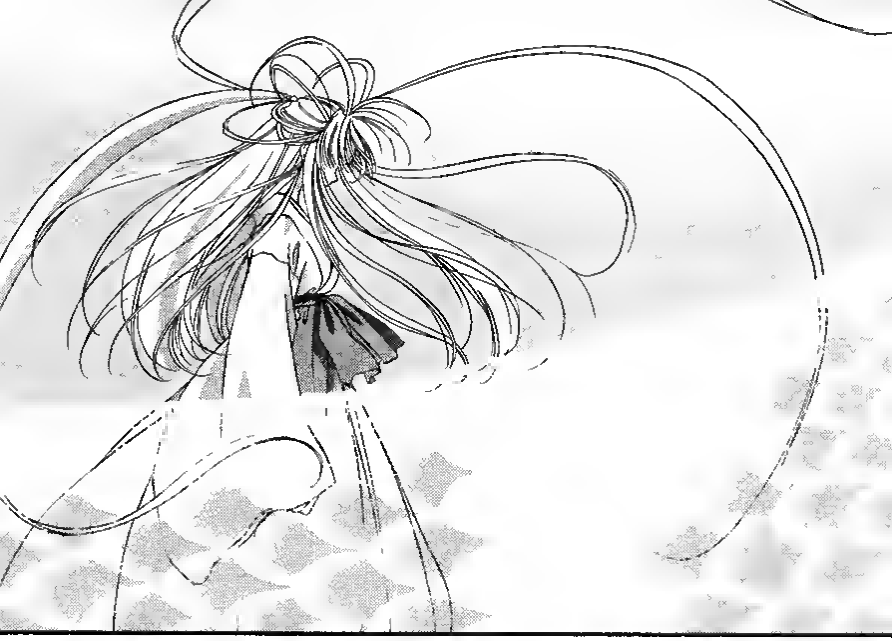
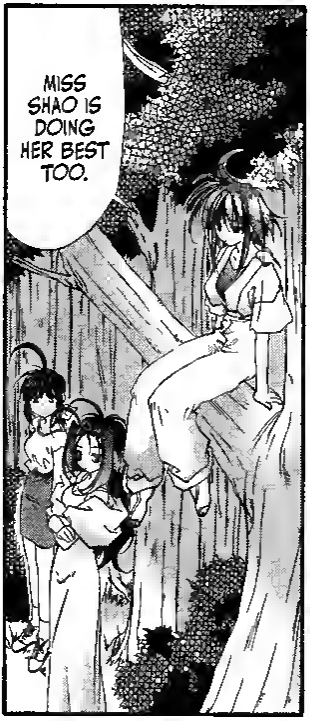
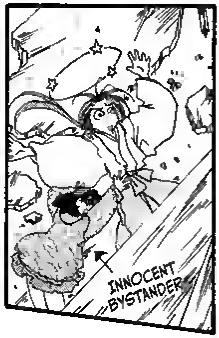
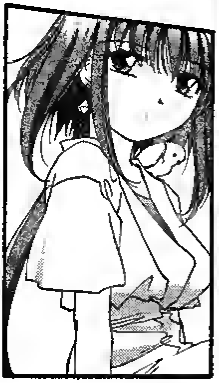
CHAPTER 63
SHAORIN OF MIYAUCHI SHRINE
(PART 4)

ZHUA
ZHUA
ZHUA
SHAO!!




MISS SHAO IS DOING HER BEST TOO.


INNOCENT BYSTANDER

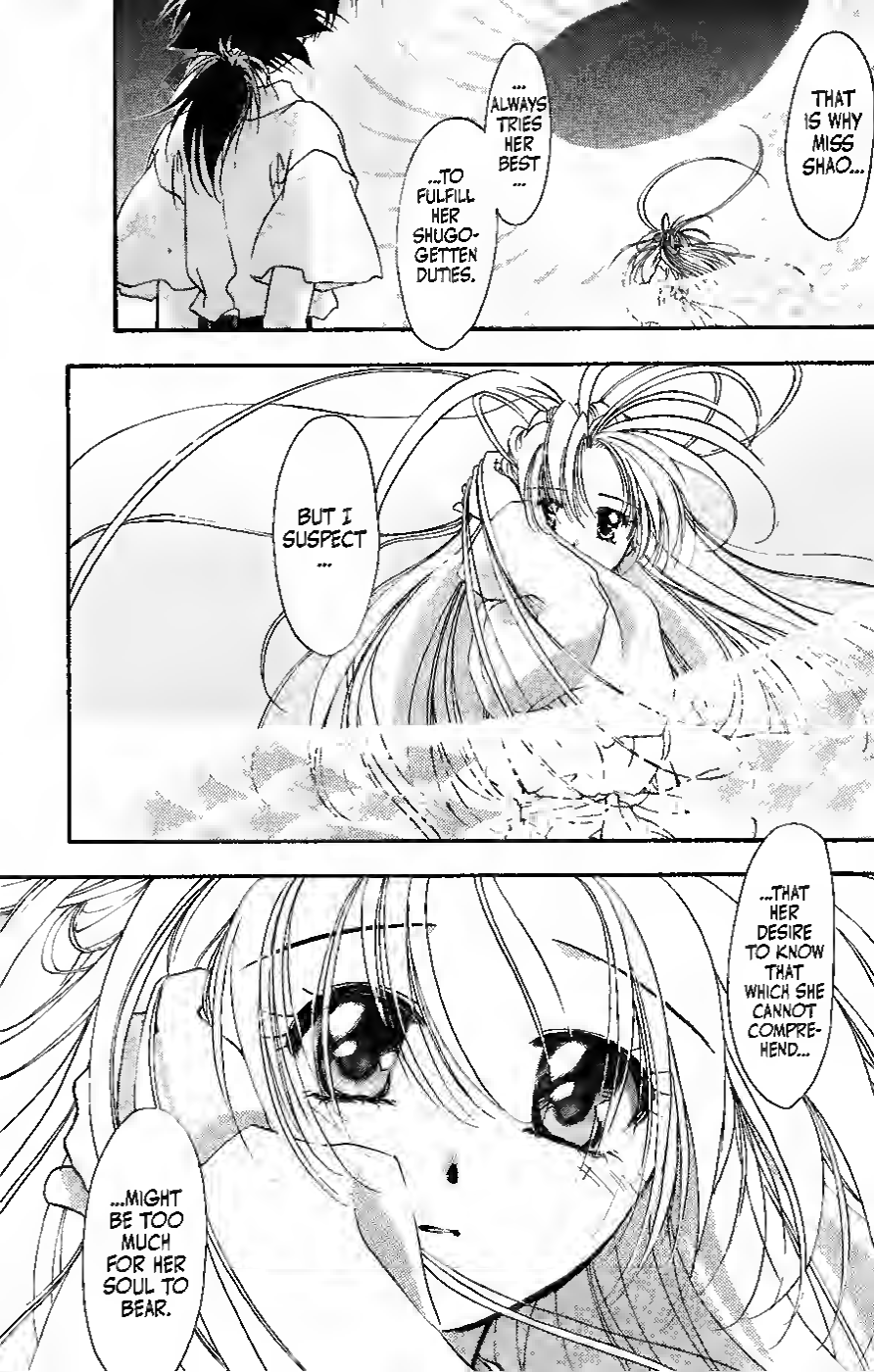


OVER-REACTING MUCH?
POOR IZUPII.

SHAO...
BECAUSE I'M A SHUGOGETTEN.
PLEASE DON'T FORGET...
...OKAY?

YOU KNOW...
...THE OTHER DAY..
...MISS SHAO TOLD ME...
UMM...
I THOUGHT MAYBE...
...IF I...
...WASN'T A SHUGO CHARA GETTEN AND...
...IF...I DIDN'T HAVE...
...TO THINK ABOUT ONLY MY DUTIES, THEN...

...MAYBE...I COULD HAVE...
...LEARNED ABOUT A LOT OF OTHER THINGS.
MISS SHAO IS DOING THE BEST SHE KNOWS HOW.
SHE'S DESPERATE TO FIND...
...EVEN SLIGHTLY BETTER WAYS OF PROTECTING MY LIEGE.
SHE HAS TO.
OTHERWISE SHE CANNOT STAY WITH HIM.


THAT IS WHY MISS SHAO...
...ALWAYS TRIES HER BEST...
...TO FULFILL HER SHUGO-GETTEN DUTIES.
BUT I SUSPECT...
...THAT HER DESIRE TO KNOW THAT WHICH SHE CANNOT COMPRE-HEND...
...MIGHT BE TOO MUCH FOR HER SOUL TO BEAR.

MASTER TASUKE?
IT'S MASTER TASUKE ...
LOOK, RUIHE-KIJIN.

MASTER TASUKE'S WATCHING US!

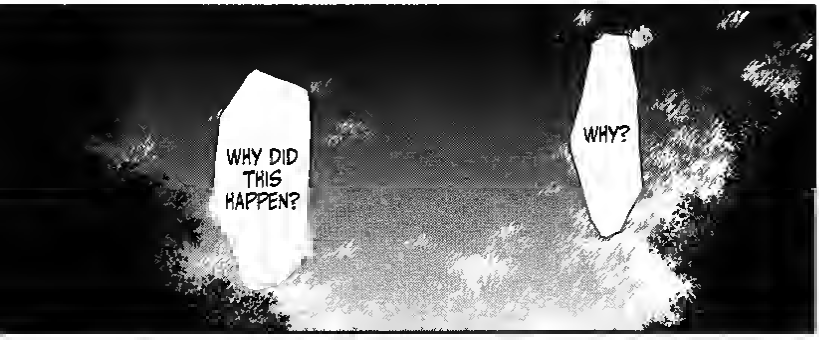
...CAME HERE FOR ME.
I JUST THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE IF MASTER TASUKE...
OF COURSE SHAO DOESN'T LIKE ME RIGHT NOW.
OKAY, KIRYUU.
I UNDER-STAND.

I'M THE ONE WHO PUT UP THE WALL...
...BETWEEN US.
THE REASON IT FELT LIKE SHAO WAS DISTANT WAS BECAUSE...
...I DISTANCED MYSELF FROM HER.
DID I GET IT RIGHT?!

HEY, SHAO!
I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOME-THING
I LIKE YOU, SHAO.
I'VE LIKED YOU FOR A LONG TIME.

THE SKY IS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL BLUE.
OOH...
AND THE FRESH AIR FEELS SO GOOD.
I HAVE SO MANY THINGS...
I'M GLAD I MADE UP WITH MASTER TASUKE.
...I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR...
OOH...BUT...

WHAT DOES "LIKE" MEAN?

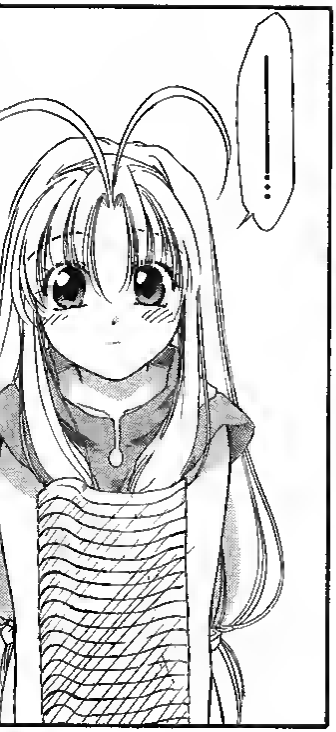


I DON'T KNOW...
...WHYYY!! WHAT DID I DO?!
WHEN I WOKE UP, IT WAS LIKE THIS AND...
ボロ...
WHEW!
...AND I WAS SO SUR-PRISED!!
MY...
I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY
GET BACK TO WORK!
STOP SLACKING OFF!!
... LIEGE.

.....
I AM TOO ASHAMED TO FACE YOU.
.....?
.....
.....
.....
I APOLOGIZE FOR ADDRESSING YOU IN SUCH A STRANGE FASHION.
...AND I LIED AND ETC
UMM, IS YOUR BIRD--
OH!!
THIS IS MS. LIEN. PLEASE BE KIND TO HER.
INTRODUCE YOURSELF, MS LIEN
I HAPPENED TO MEET HER THE OTHER DAY.
SHE'S NOT REALLY THIS BIG!!
おお
ぎゃ

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS SAYING ...
HEY, KIRYUU.
NEXT TIME YOU NEED HELP...
...JUST ASK...
...AND I'LL LEND YOU A HAND.
NOT AS YOUR "LIEGE," BUT...
...AS YOUR FRIEND.
THEN MAYBE I'LL CALL YOU KIRYUUZY.
PLEASE ... DON'T.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE A NICKNAME IT MAKES IT SEEM LIKE I'M YOUR MASTER OR SOMETHING DOESN'T IT?

HEY, URINGUN, HAVE YOU SEEN MASTER TASUKE?
HEY, URINGUN.
HAVE YOU SEEN MASTER TASUKE?
ぶん
ぶん
HUH... SHAO?
OH!
.....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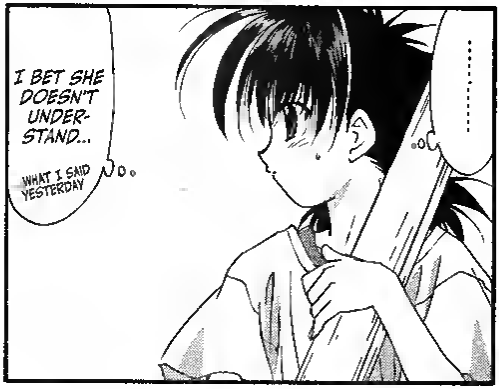
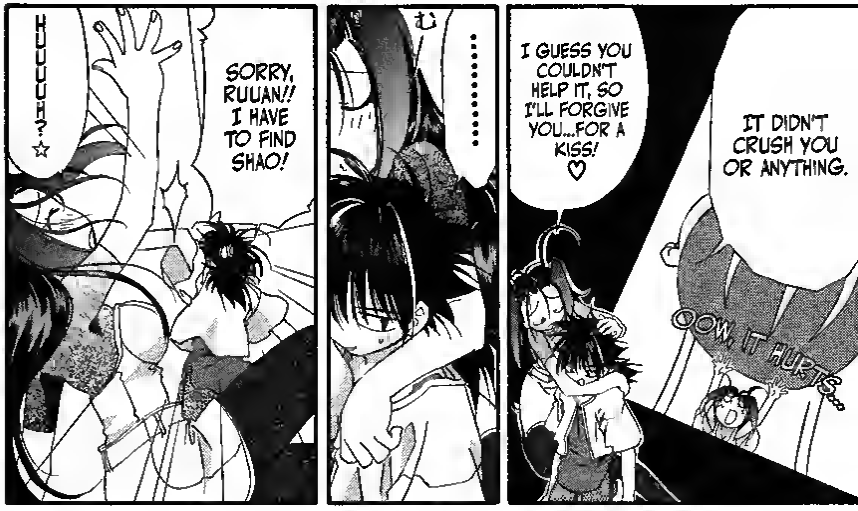

I BET SHE DOESN'T UNDER-STAND...
WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY
.....

URINGUN!! I'M GOING OVER THERE!
HUH?
ﾀｯﾀｯﾀｯ

HEH...
"HEH"?

SHAO?
TASUKEEE! WHERE ARE YOU GOOO-ING?

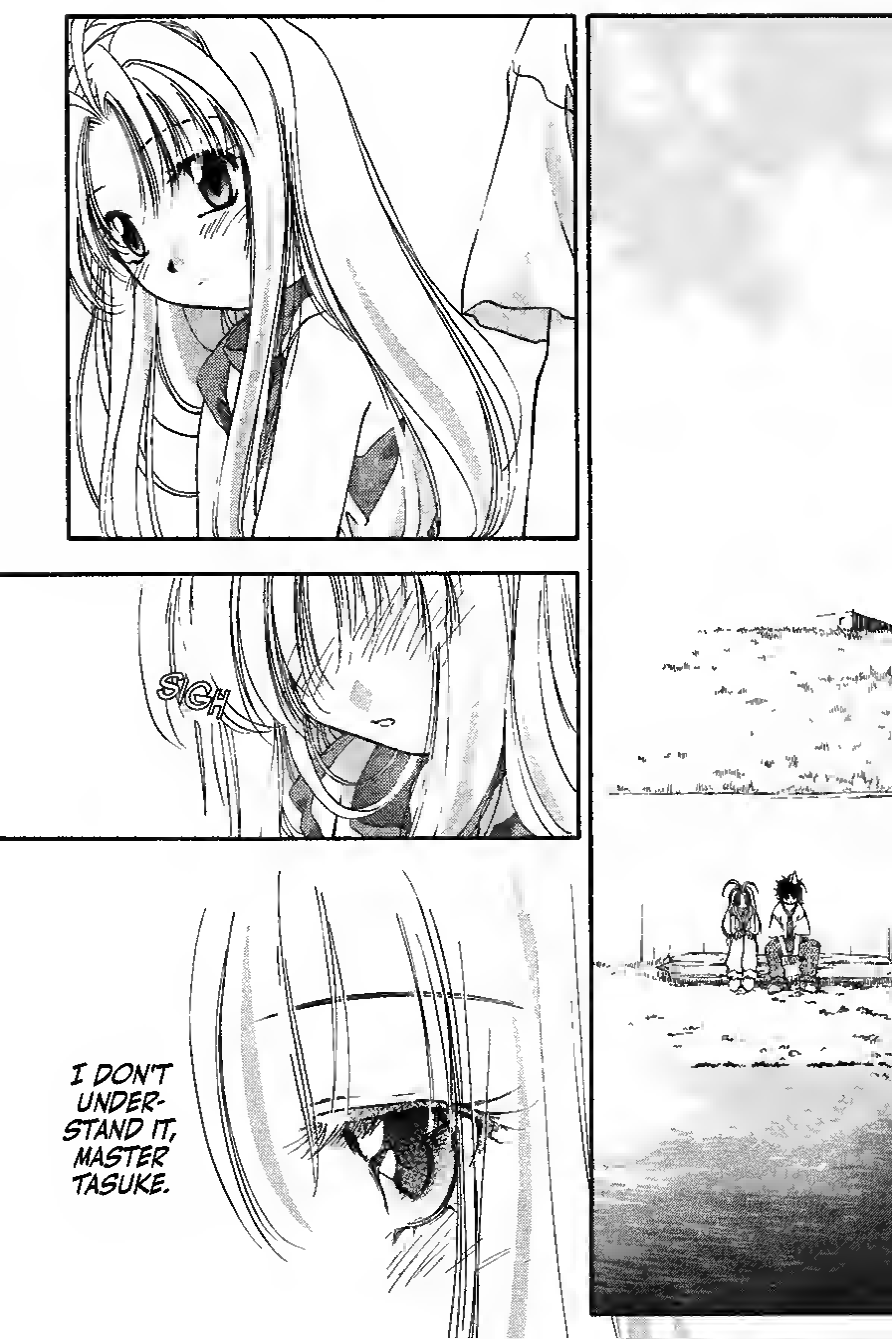
OH NO YOU DON'T.
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, MASTER TAA?
UGH.
MASTER TAA, YOU MEEAANIE. YESTERDAY A DARUMA SMOOSHIED RUUAN, AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE.
SOOO RUUUDE.


I GUESS YOU COULDN'T HELP IT, SO I'LL FORGIVE YOU...FOR A KISS!
IT DIDN'T CRUSH YOU OR ANYTHING.
OOW, IT HURTS...
む
.....
SORRY, RUUAN!! I HAVE TO FIND SHAO!
EEEEEEEE?☆

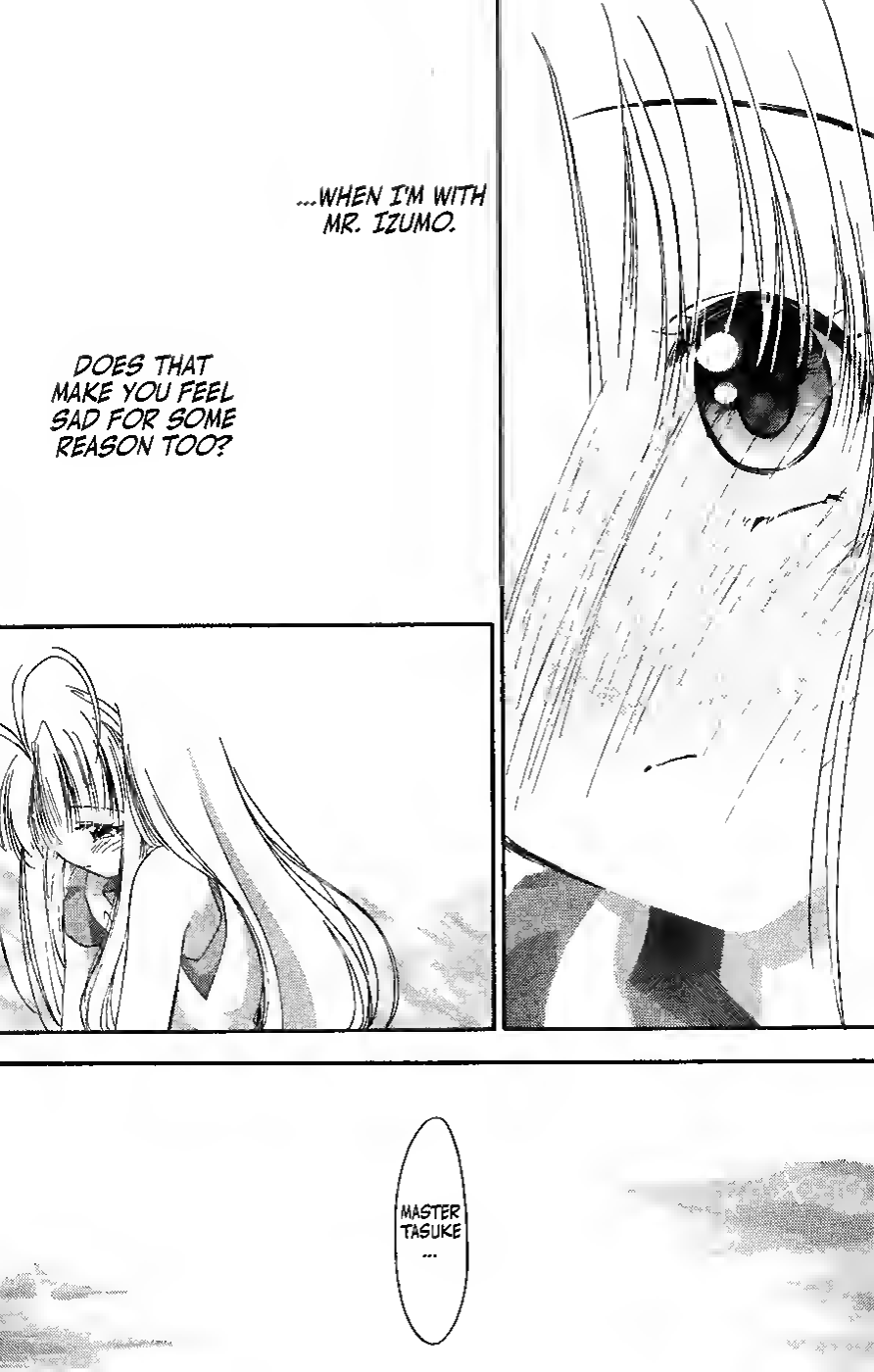
CALM DOWN, ME!
I SHOULD BE APOLOGIZING, NOT HIDING.
NO, YOU DON'T.
KAORI
AND I HAVE TO TELL HIM WHAT I FOUND OUT.

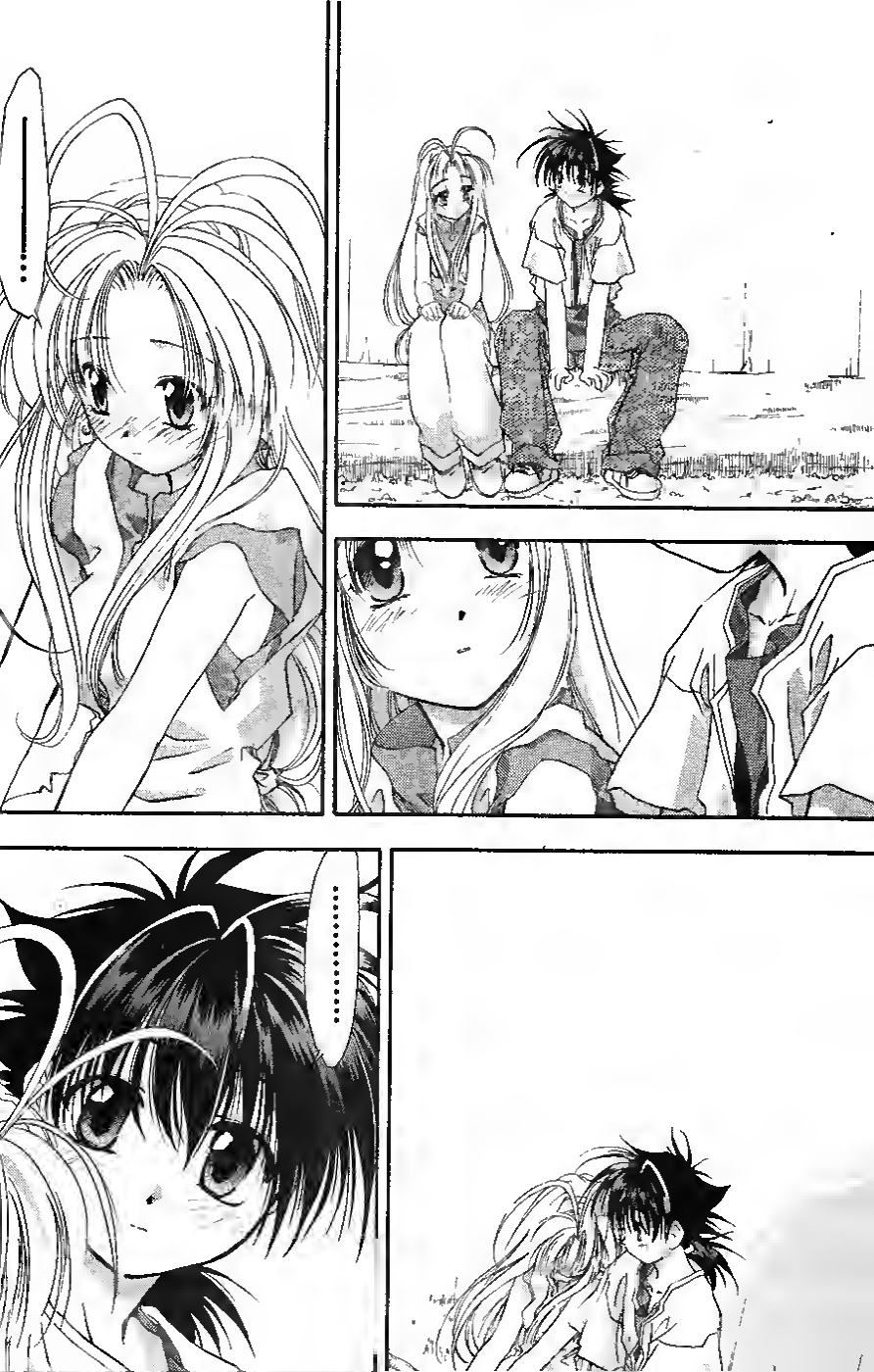
ぎゅ…
WHAT?
KAORI?
!!
WHAT DO YOU WANT? DON'T JUST STARE AT ME
HEY!!
HURRY, KENEN!
OH!
WHAT?!

SO YOU'VE GIVEN UP TOO, HUH?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. BOYFRIEND. YOU HAVEN'T HEARD.
NO. YOU SEE...
...I'M ALREADY OVER IT.
.....


SIGH
I DON'T UNDER-STAND IT, MASTER TASUKE.

...IT MADE ME FEEL SAD FOR SOME REASON.
YESTERDAY, WHEN I SAW MISS KAORI...
...WAITING FOR YOU...
THAT'S WHY...
...I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD APOLOGIZE...

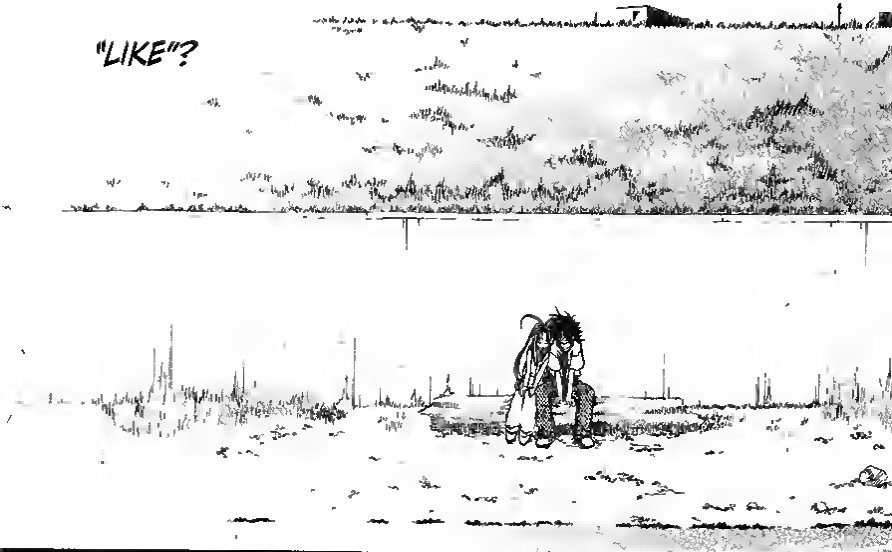

...WHEN I'M WITH MR. IZUMO.
DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL SAD FOR SOME REASON TOO?
MASTER TASUKE ...



I THINK I'LL JUST TELL HIM LATER...
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I FEEL KIND OF HAPPY RIGHT NOW.
SOMETHING FEELS WARM AND NICE.
WHAT IS THIS FEELING?
IS THIS "LIKE"?

IT'S DIFFERENT FROM HOW I LIKE MISS SHOUKO.

WHAT IS "LIKE" ?



MASTER TASUKE "LIKES" ME?

I..."LIKE" MASTER TASUKE?

CHAPTER 64
NANKYOKU JYUSEI'S THOUGHTS

...REALLY LIKE YOU!!
UMM, YOU KNOW, I, UMM...
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE.
OOH.

I REALLY LIKE YOU...
...NANKYOKU JYUSEI!!
YOU CAN'T!
HMM?
むくっ
OH, REALLY.
I'M NEVER GOING TO WAKE UP IN TIME TO-MORROW.

WHYYY?
WHY CAN'T I GO TO SLEEP?
PLEEAASE LET ME
EXHAUSTED FROM THE NIGHT SHIFT
YOU CAN'T, RUUAN! NO FALLING ASLEEP!!
I'VE GOT A BOWL OF MY SPECIAL ASSORTMENT OF DELICIOUS GOODIES JUST FOR YOU.
YOU IN FRONT OF EVERYONE ELSE.

WELL, GOOD MORNING!
HIKING UP A MOUNTAIN.
NOW I'VE ELIMINATED ANYONE WHO WOULD GET IN MY WAY.
MAYBE IT'S THE LACK OF SLEEP, BUT HE'S INHUMANE.
OKAY.
OUT COLD.

.....
~YESTERDAY~
...SHIO.
FYI THEY'RE SHOPPING
YES?
IT SEEMS YOU'RE GOING ON A DAYT?
FOR THOSE WHO DON'T REMEMBER. HOSHIGAMI: NANKYOKU JYUSEI STUBBORN OLD MAN.
IT SEEMS HE WAS LISTENING FROM INSIDE THE SHITENRIN YESTERDAY.
=HA HAA LONG TIME NO SEE

YES!
UHM, I WAS WONDERING...
DO YOU WANT TO GO ON A... A DATE... TOMORROW?
AFTER ALL, IT IS A HOLIDAY...
AND THEN...
...AFTER SHE ACCEPTED, SHE ASKED...
HEY, NANKYOKU JYUSEI...
...WHAT'S A "DAYT"?
...
"WHAT'S A 'DAYT'?"
I AM NATURALLY INCLINED TO TEACH HER THE ANSWERS TO HER QUESTIONS.
BUT...

ALL LIES.
HMM. I HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST IDEA.
WELL NOW, A DAYT...
I TOLD YOU NOT TO TELL!
I SUP-POSE I MUST ACCOMPANY YOU ON YOUR "DAYT," OR WE SHALL NEVER KNOW WHAT IT IS.
THIS CANNOT BE HELPED.

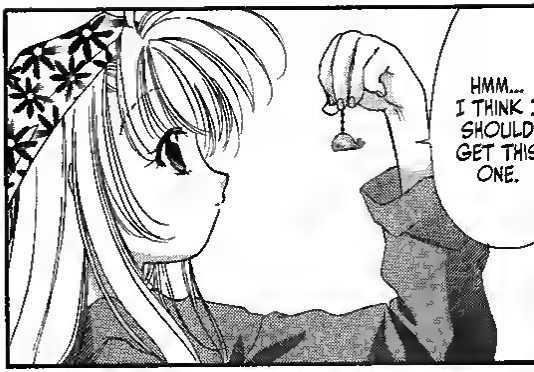
WOW.
SO MANY FISHIES!!
MATSUSHIMA AQUARIUM
TWO STUDENT PASSES, PLEASE ...
WAIT, HUH?! SHAO COUNTS AS A STUDENT, RIGHT? OH! UGH, WHAT ABOUT THE OLD MAN?!
ODAITE'S AMAZING? ISN'T HANKYOU YUUSEI?
.....

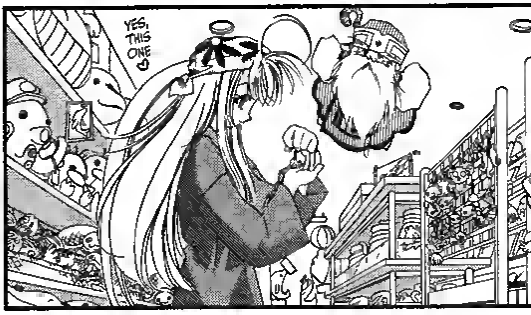
MASTER TASUKE! LOOK! IT'S A MR. OCTOPUS!!
WHOOAA!
LET THIS OLD MAN TAKE A LOOK HERE FOR YOU.
HMM... YOU SEE, THIS IS A GIANT PACIFIC OCTOPUS.
A GIANT PACIFIC OCTOPUS.
.....

THIS OLD MAN CAN TELL YOU ALL ABOUT OCTOPI IN MORE DETAIL.
ACTUALLY, SHAO, IT SAYS HERE THIS IS A PINK MAOMAO.
WEIRD NAME, HUH?
THIS OLD MAN WILL MAKE SURE IT'S NOT POISONED FIRST!!
HERE, SHAO, TRY SOME TAIYAKI!*
...

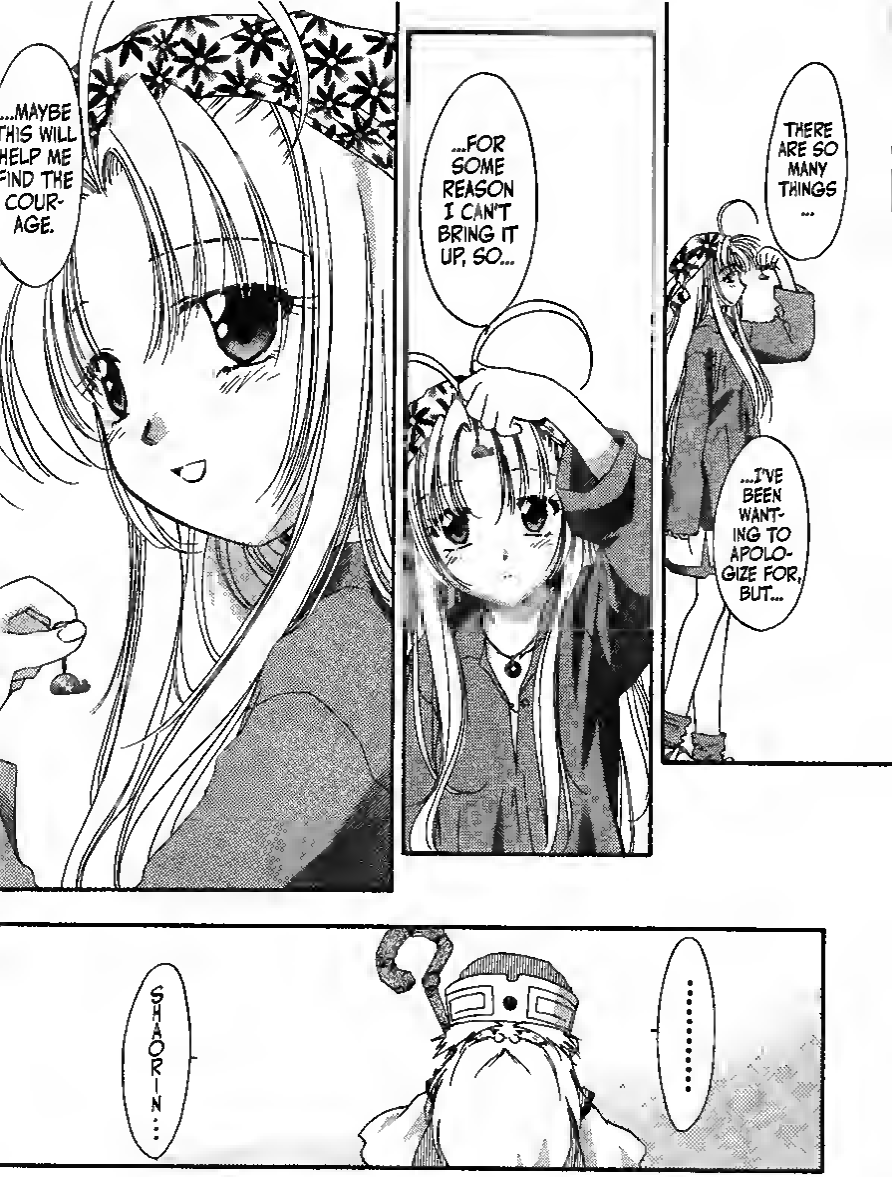
* FISH-SHAPED PANCAKES WITH SWEET BEAN FILLING IN THEM.

MASTER TASUKE, I WANT TO LOOK AT SOMETHING REAL QUICK. PLEASE WAIT FOR ME UP THERE, OKAY?
SHEESH, I'M TIRED OH YEAH, I HAVEN'T SLEPT...
NOT EVEN LISTENING.





BUT IT'S STILL TASUKE'S MO

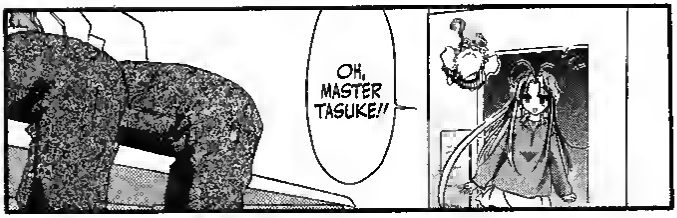

...MAYBE THIS WILL HELP ME FIND THE COUR-AGE.
...FOR SOME REASON I CAN'T BRING IT UP, SO...
THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS ...
...I'VE BEEN WANT-ING TO APOLO-GIZE FOR, BUT...
SHAORIN...
.....

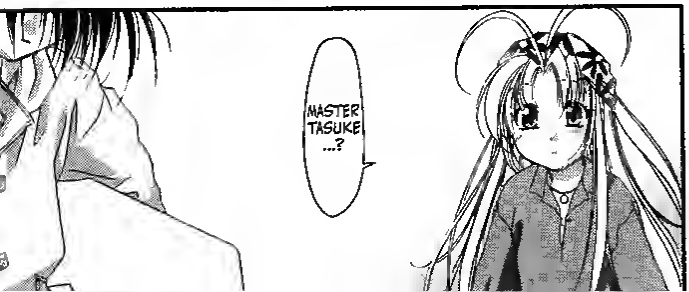
UMM, NANKYOKU JYUSEI...

...YOU KNOW...

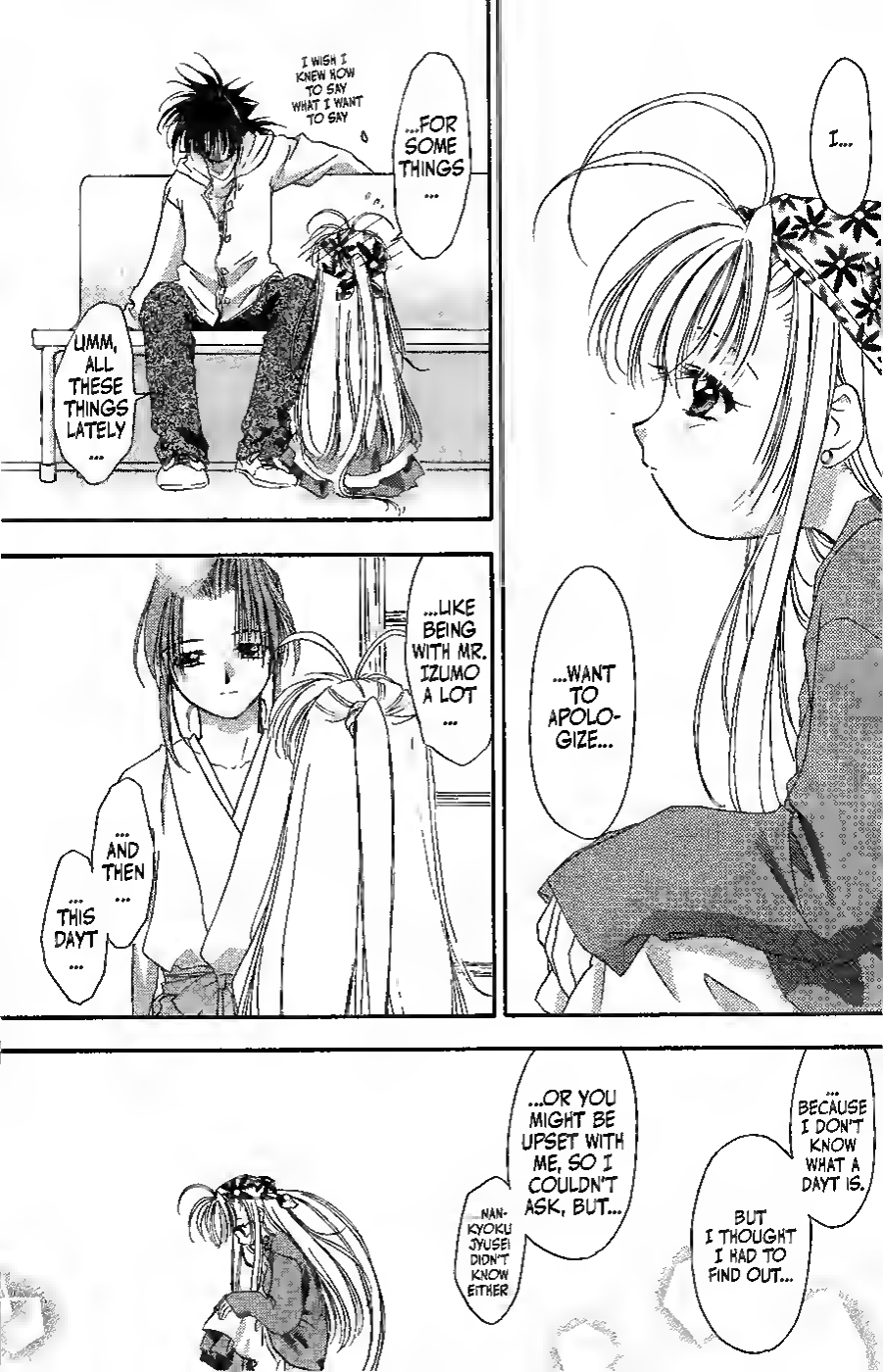
...I...

どぃしぇ
WHEW.
SHAO, WANT TO REST FOR A MINUTE...?

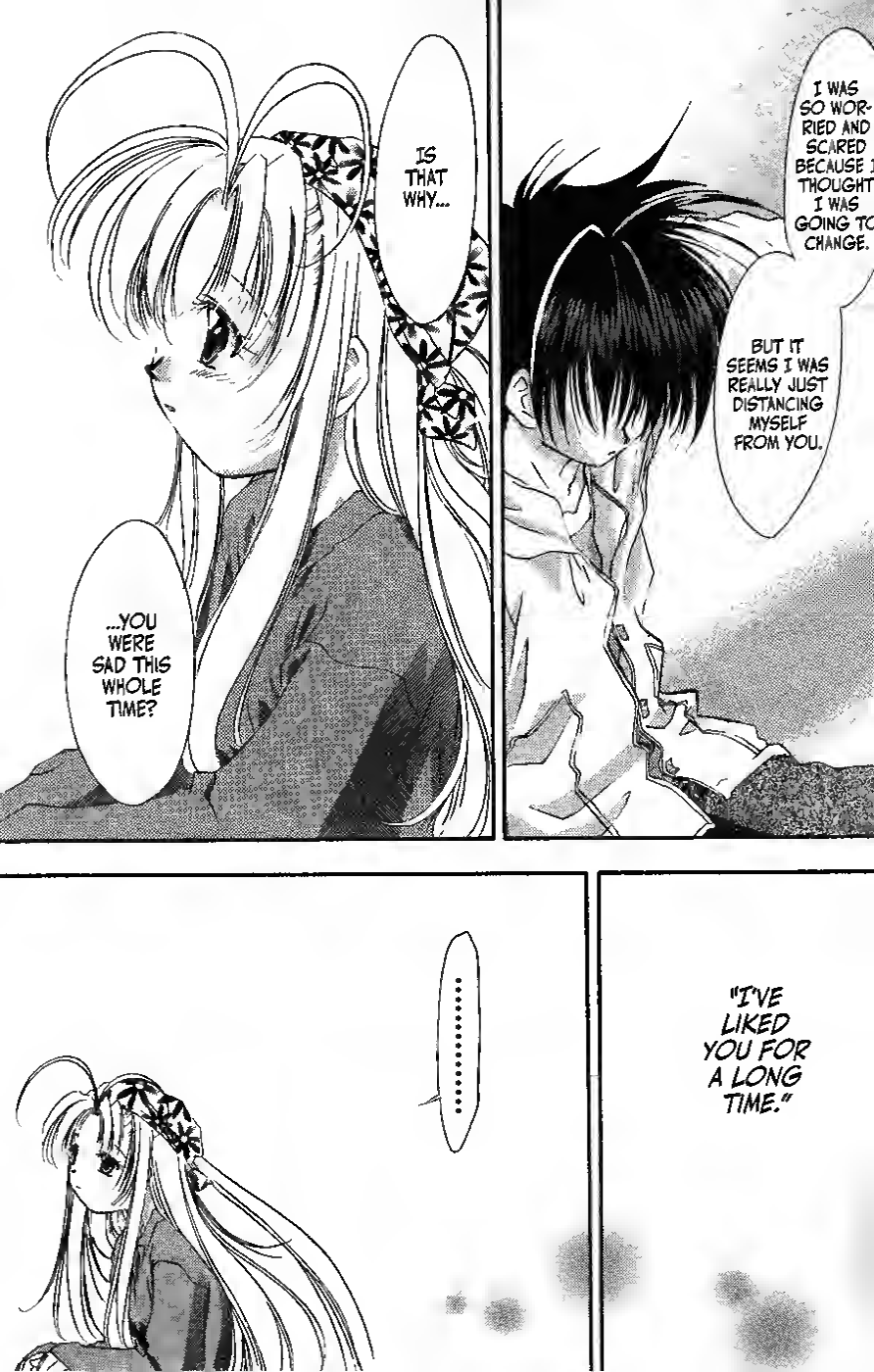

OH, MASTER TASUKE!!

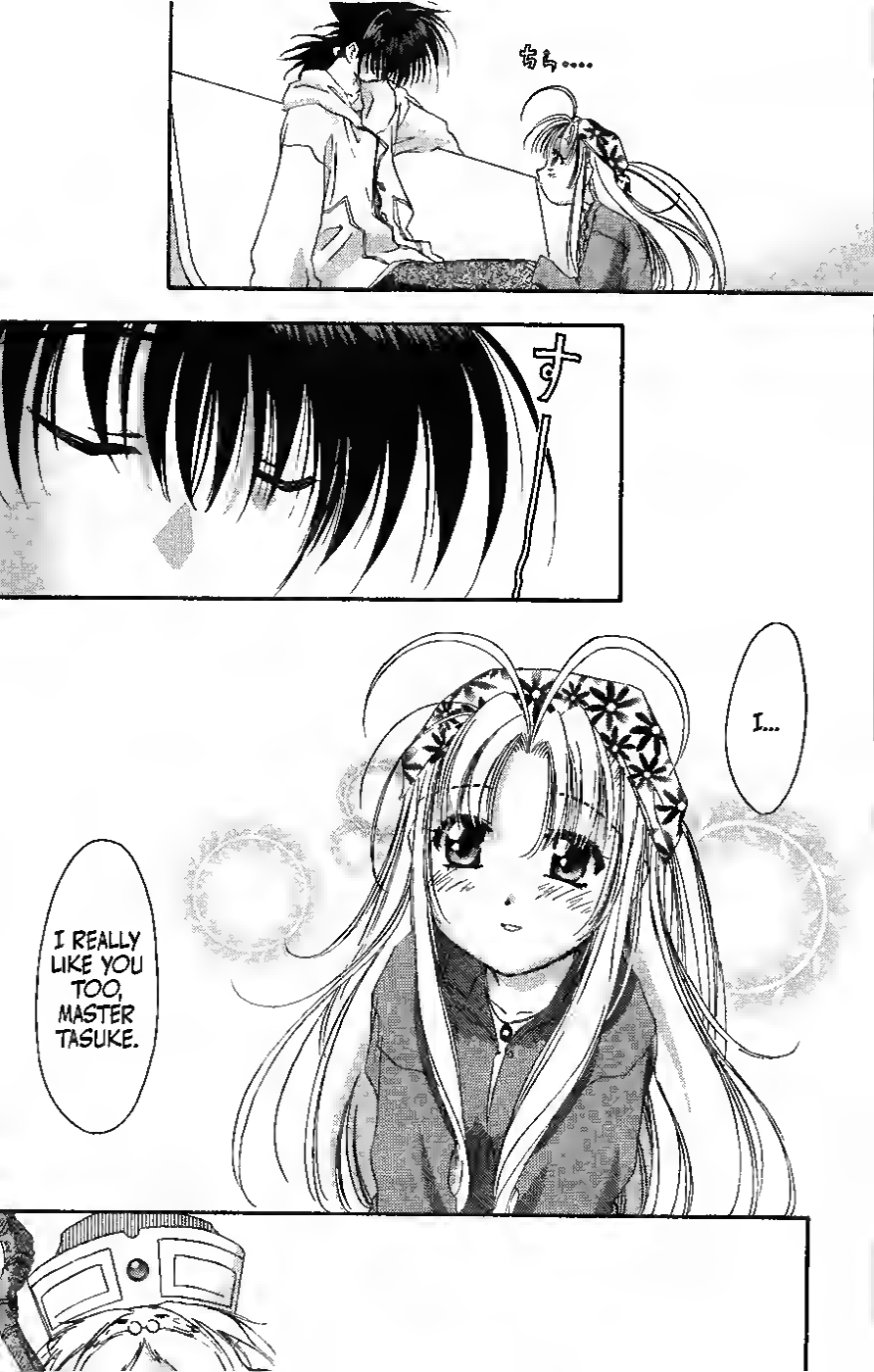

MASTER TASUKE ...?

HOW RUDE OF HIM TO FALL ASLEEP AND LEAVE SHAORIN ALONE!!
.....
MASTER TASUKE ...


I WISH I KNEW HOW TO SAY WHAT I WANT TO SAY
...FOR SOME THINGS ...
UMM, ALL THESE THINGS LATELY ...
I...
...WANT TO APOLO-GIZE...
...LIKE BEING WITH MR. IZUMO A LOT ...
... AND THEN ... ... THIS DAYT ...
... BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHAT A DAYT IS.
BUT I THOUGHT I HAD TO FIND OUT...
...OR YOU MIGHT BE UPSET WITH ME, SO I COULDN'T ASK, BUT...
...NAN-KYOKU JYUSEI DIDN'T KNOW EITHER

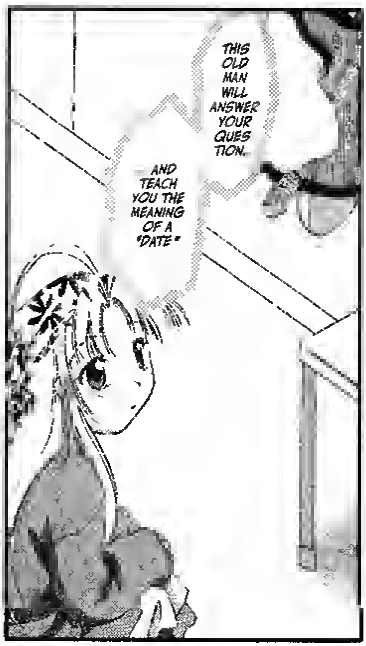
ANYWAY, I'M SORRY.
.....
I....
...FIGURED OUT...
...WHAT'S MAK-ING...
...YOU SO SAD.


I WAS SO WORRIED AND SCARED BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO CHANGE.
BUT IT SEEMS I WAS REALLY JUST DISTANCING MYSELF FROM YOU.
IS THAT WHY...
...YOU WERE SAD THIS WHOLE TIME?
"I'VE LIKED YOU FOR A LONG TIME."
.....

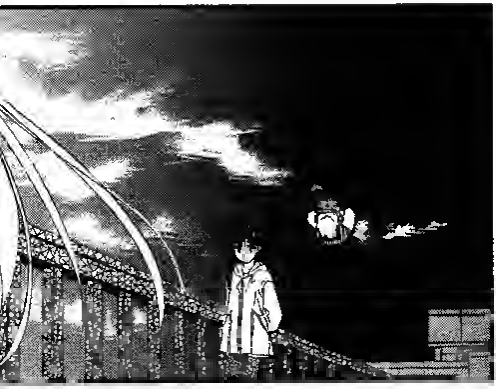

ちち....
す
I...
I REALLY LIKE YOU TOO, MASTER TASUKE.

N.N-KYOKU JYUSEI...
...I'M A BAD SHUGO-GETTEN.
WHEN I TRY TO TALK TO MASTER TASUKE, I GET... ...EMBARRASSED AND IT DOESN'T COME OUT RIGHT.
SHAORIN...

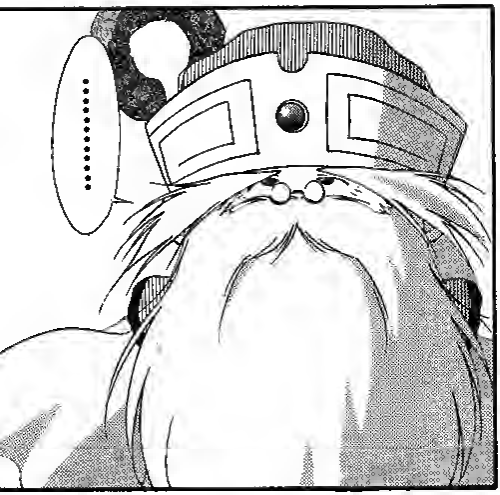
WHEN TWO PEOPLE WHO ESPECIALLY LIKE EACH OTHER GO SOMEPLACE TOGETHER ...
...IT IS CALLED A DATE.


THIS OLD MAN WILL ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.
AND TEACH YOU THE MEANING OF A "DATE."

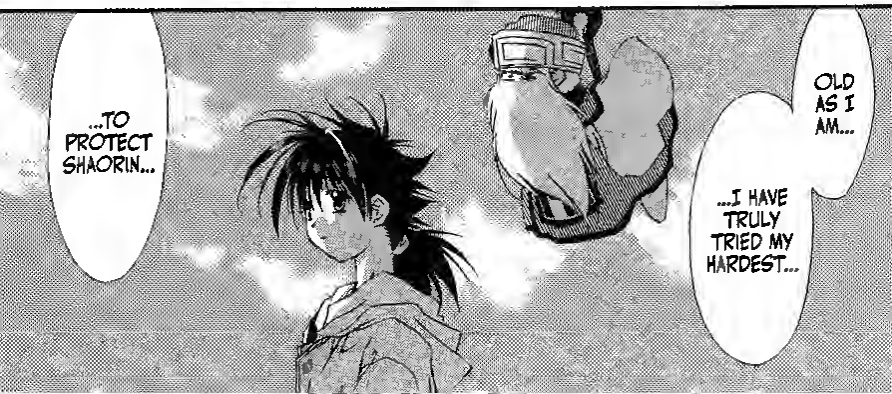
UMM, YOU KNOW...
...I REALLY LIKE YOU, NANKYOKU JYUSEI.
THANK YOU FOR BEING SO NICE TO ME.



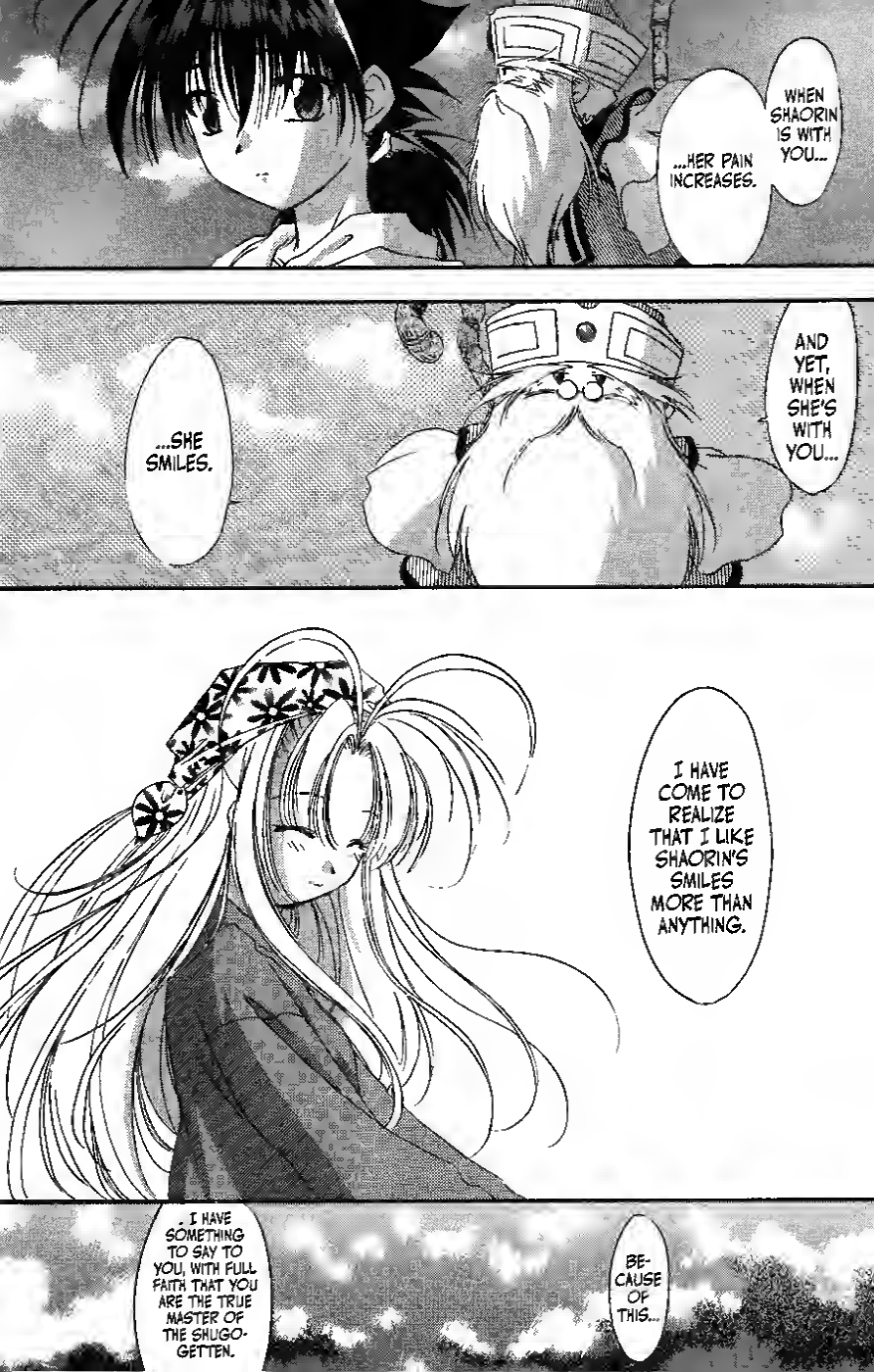
THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING ME ALL THE TIME.



I LIKE YOU A LOT!!

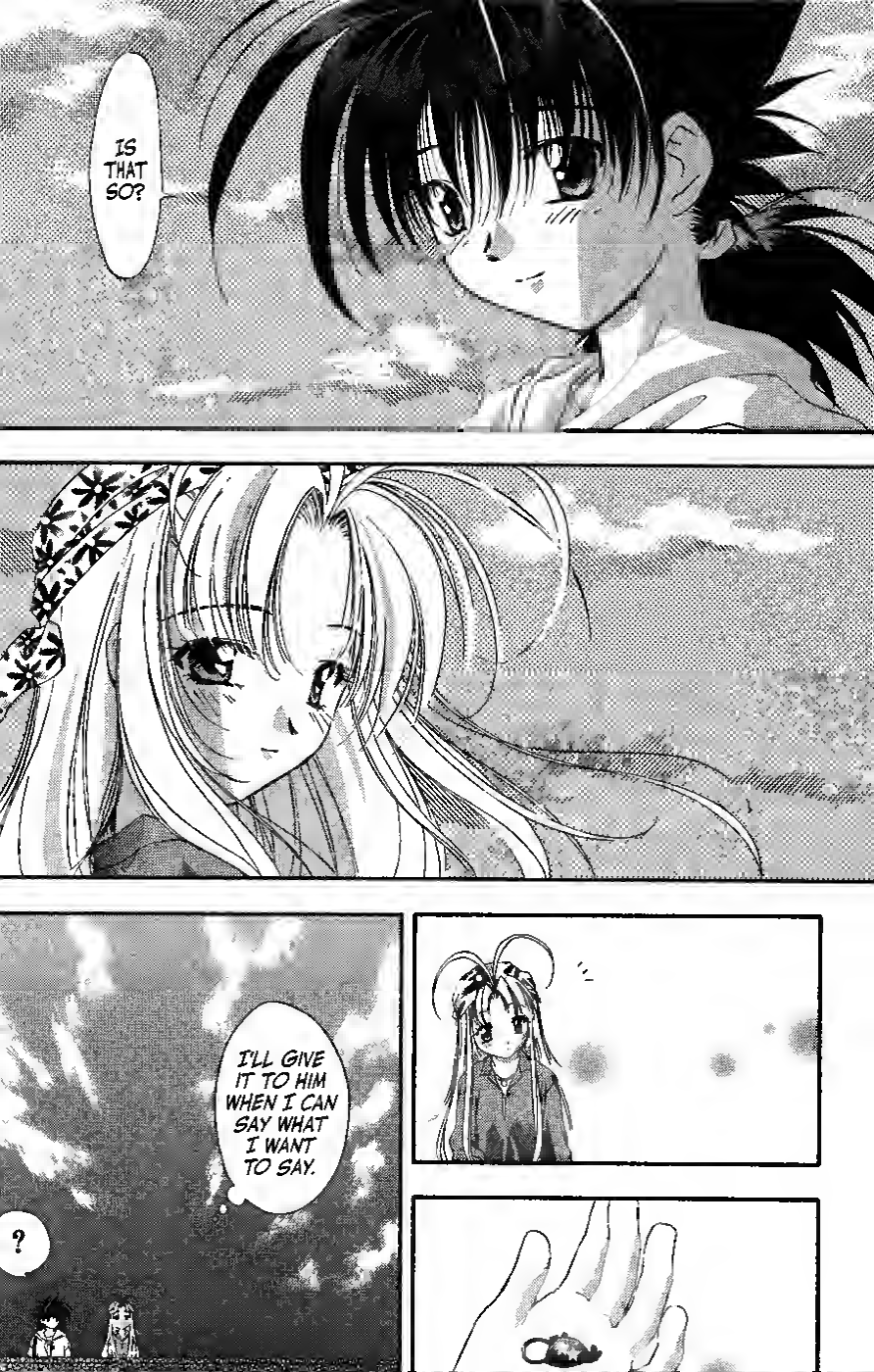


...AND PROTECT HER DELICATE HEART.
I RAISED HER WITH UTMOST CARE...
...SO THAT SHE WOULD SMILE MORE THAN ANY OTHER SPIRIT.
HOWEVER...
...THIS IS THE MOST JOYFUL...
...I HAVE EVER SEEN HER.
.....


WHEN SHAORIN IS WITH YOU...
...HER PAIN INCREASES.
AND YET, WHEN SHE'S WITH YOU...
...SHE SMILES.
I HAVE COME TO REALIZE THAT I LIKE SHAORIN'S SMILES MORE THAN ANYTHING.
BE-CAUSE OF THIS...
I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU, WITH FULL FAITH THAT YOU ARE THE TRUE MASTER OF THE SHUGO-GETTEN.

I ENTRUST ...
... SHAORIN'S FATE TO YOU.
PLEASE BE HER LIGHT...
...SO THAT HER WONDERFUL SMILE NEVER DISAPPEARS.
MASTER TASUKE, MASTER TASUKE!!
THE SUNSET IS SO BEAUTIFUL!

MASTER TASUKE, UMM...YOU KNOW WHAT?
...!
I KNOW WHAT A...
...DATE IS NOW.


IS THAT SO?
I'LL GIVE IT TO HIM WHEN I CAN SAY WHAT I WANT TO SAY.
?

IS THIS YOUR WISH?
EEK! NOTHING
WHAT IS THAT SHOP

SLOWLY
THE SEAL
UNRAVELS.

CHAPTER 65
THE WAVERING MAIDEN (PART 1)

AKIHO HOT SPRINGS SHUTTLE
AWESOME!! THAT'S GREAT, AKIHOO!!
WHO?
DON'T STAND UP. DON'T STAND UP.
HEY, DRIVER!! DOES AKIHO HOT SPRINGS HAVE KARAOKE?!
WHY, YES, WE DO.
D
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
O-O-O-O-O-H!!!
THAT'S H-O-T HOT SPRINGS! SAY IT, HOT SPRINGS!
I'M TOO HUNGRY TO LISTEN TO YOUR CHATTER
KARAOKE'S BETTER THAN PING PONG!!

DO YOU WRITHE BECAUSE YOU ARE SO ANXIOUS TO SING, MY LITTLE PIKADEON?!!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S WRITHING
MY PIKADEON
HOW OLD ARE YOU?
MY MIKEY-TRON WRITHES IN MY SUITCASE.
I FEEL FUNNY.
IT'S LIKE I'M CALM BUT NOT CALM.
YOU EVEN HAVE A SPARE?
AND THIS ONE IS BACKUP SINGER
KAORI, DID YOU READ YOUR HOROSCOPE?!
JUST BEING NEAR HIM
GIVES ME A PAINFUL
...PRICKLY FEELING.
OH, NO. I HAVEN'T SEEN IT YET.
YOU HAVEN'T?! I'LL READ IT TO YOU!
FOR VIRGOS, THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR LOVE IN DECEMBER!!
"BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, YOUR DEEPEST DESIRES WILL FINALLY COME TRUE..."

"IF YOU DO..."
"...HE'LL PROBABLY THINK IT'S CUTE."
LET ME SEE!!
EEK!
"...ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE A SECRET CRUSH!!"
"DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE SELFISH TO GET YOUR SECRET LOVE'S ATTENTION." ♡
RIGHT?
I KNOW...
IT'S BECAUSE OF LOVE THAT I HAVE THIS PRICKLY FEELING.

ESPECIALLY SINCE IT'S MY FIRST LOVE!!
THANKS FOR TELLING ME, YUKA!
I KNOW IT'S GOING TO COME TRUE!
HMM...
MAYBE I SHOULD FALL IN LOVE TOO.
OH, TAKASHI!
WHAT?
...THE HOT SPRINGS?
YES... AND UM...

...CAN'T BELIEVE ...
...I JUST SAID THAT!!
I...
...TASUKE... OR SOME-ONE...
WILL YOU ASK YOUR FRIENDS TO COME TOO?
LIKE, MAYBE ...
I JUST GAVE MYSELF AWAY!
BUT THERE'S NO WAY I COULD ASK TASUKE MYSELF
SO YOU'RE BACK ON THE HUNT AGAIN, EH?
AHA HA IT'S THAT OBVIOUS

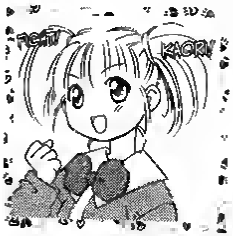
UM, WELL, YOU KNOW ...
OOH, I'M SO HUNGRY
WHAT ABOUT SHOUKO AND IZUMO?
IT'S NO FUN WITHOUT THEM.
SHOUKO & TO PLAY WITH IZUMO & TO POKE FUN AT
SHOUKO'S BUSY VISITING WITH HER RELATIVES.
AND IZUMO HAS TO WORK
LUCKILY
I'M NOT ...
...SO SURE ABOUT THIS.
YAY! YAY!
THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE GOING NOW...
I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN
YAY!
YAY!
YAY!

I'LL TRY MY HARDEST TO BE SELFISH JUST FOR TODAY!!

THIS IS MY CHANCE!

I CAN'T WASTE IT OR YUKA WILL BE DISAP-POINTED.

BUT, BUT ...!!



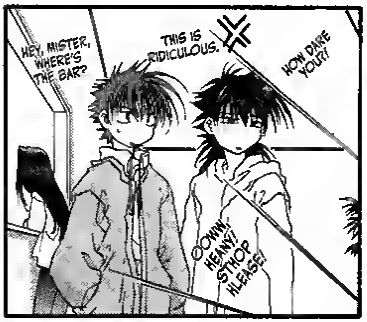
YOU CAN'T WAIT FOR HAPPINESS TO FIND YOU-- YOU HAVE TO GRAB IT WITH YOUR OWN HANDS.

RIGHT, TASUKE? ♡

I'M IN TASUKE'S ROOM!!
ARE YOU CRAZY, LITTLE GIRL?
YUKA, I WON'T GIVE UP!!
AND SO IT BEGINS.
THEY DON'T WASTE ANY TIME

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE. I DIDN'T INVITE YOU, MISS RUUAN.
SHE'S RIGHT! RIGHT!!

I'M THE ONE WHO INVITED EVERYONE SO...
...I GET TO DECIDE WHO STAYS WITH TASUKE! SO THERE!!


HEY, MISTER, WHERE'S THE BAR?
THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
HOW DARE YOU?!
DOWN! HEAVY! STHOP H-LEASE!

THIS FEELS SOOO GOOD...
AAH. SIIIGH...
ARE YOU OKAY, MISS SHAO?

.....
MASTER TASUKE AND MISS KAORI...
...ARE SHARING A ROOM NOW.
.....
DOES THAT BOTHER YOU?
IF IT BOTHERS YOU, YOU SHOULD TELL HIM.
...PROBABLY.
I KNOW ...

MISS SHAO.
HOT SPRINGS FEEL AMAZING, DO THEY NOT?
...YES.
THIS IS JUST GONNA MAKE PROBLEMS!!
LET'S WORK THIS OUT ANOTHER WAY!!
IF I DON'T GET TO BE IN YOUR ROOM, I'M GOING HOME!!
!!?
I DON'T WANT TO!!
SHE'S BEING A TOTAL PAIN, BUT NORMALLY SHE ISN'T THAT BAD.
DOESN'T IT SEEM A BIT STRANGE?
.....
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE LIKE THAT?
BECAUSE I'M LONELY?
OH... OF COURSE.
YOU'RE SO SMART
IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S SCHEMING SOMETHING.

HAAA! OH OW WHOOOAAA!
THAT'S NOT A SONG, BAKA!
LISTEN...
KARAO
AKIH
RAIDEON (CORDLESS MIC)
...TO ME SIIIIING!!!
TASUKE!!
LET'S DO A DUET NEXT. ♡
UMM... MASTER TASUKE!!
YOU KNOW--
HUH? UH, THAT'S OKAY. YOU GO AHEAD.
I DON'T WANT TOOO! I WANT TO SING WITH YOOUU!!

I'M GLAD I'M NOT THE ONLY ADULT HERE.
CLAP CLAP

.....

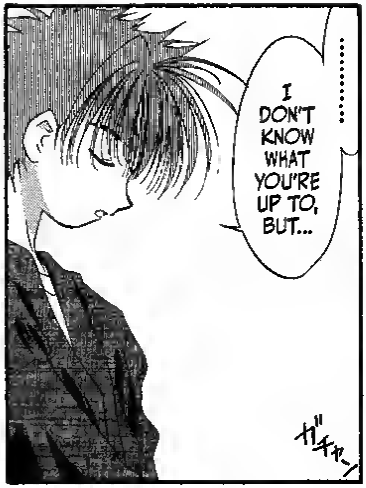
I'M GOING TO THE HOT SPRINGS!
KAAACCCLE
WOO! LOOK AT YOU TWO HEATING THINGS UP!!

WHAT DID I GET MYSELF INTO?
HA HA! CHEERS! LET'S DRINK!!
TASUKE HE SORTA STARTED

MREOW. HOT.

SAY, SHA--
.....
SMOOTH MOVE
.....
OH... NOT RIGHT NOW, I'M SORRY.
DENIED
...CHECK OUT THE GAME CENTER?
IT'S NEXT DOOR
HEY WH DON WE.

AWWW!
THAT PENGUIN'S SO CUUTE. ♡
OOH, IT'S PERFECT.
HEY, TASUKE, COME OVER HERE!!
OVER HERE, TASUKE, LOOK!!
COULD YOU PLEASE GET ME A PENGUIN?
ANY ONE IS FINE


I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BUT...
.....
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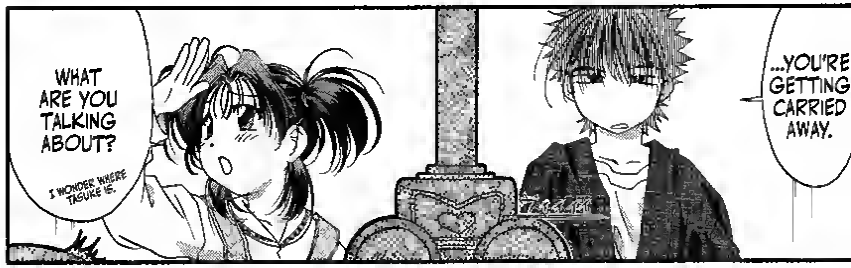
I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.
OH... IT'S YOU, TAKA-SHI.

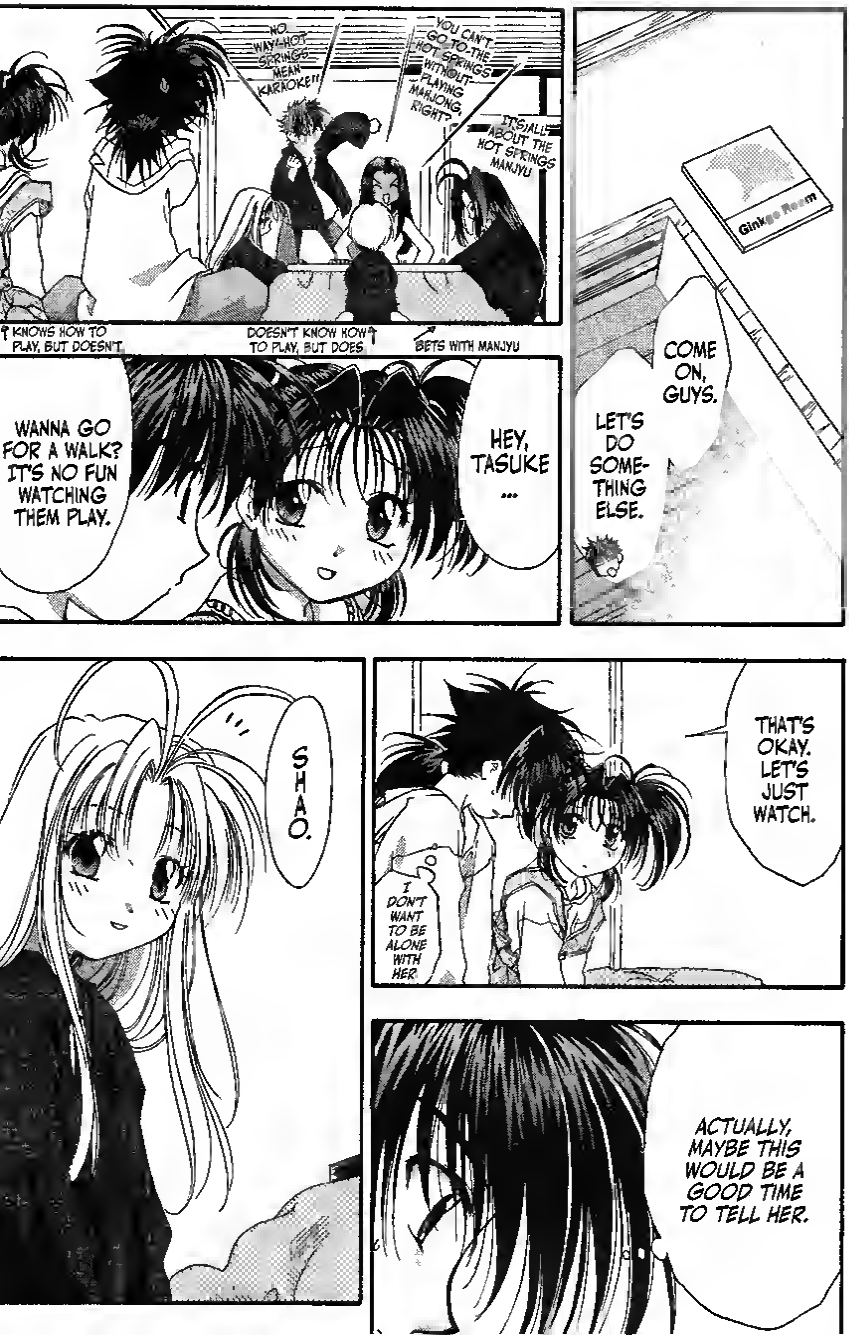

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I WONDER WHERE TASUKE IS.
...YOU'RE GETTING CARRIED AWAY.

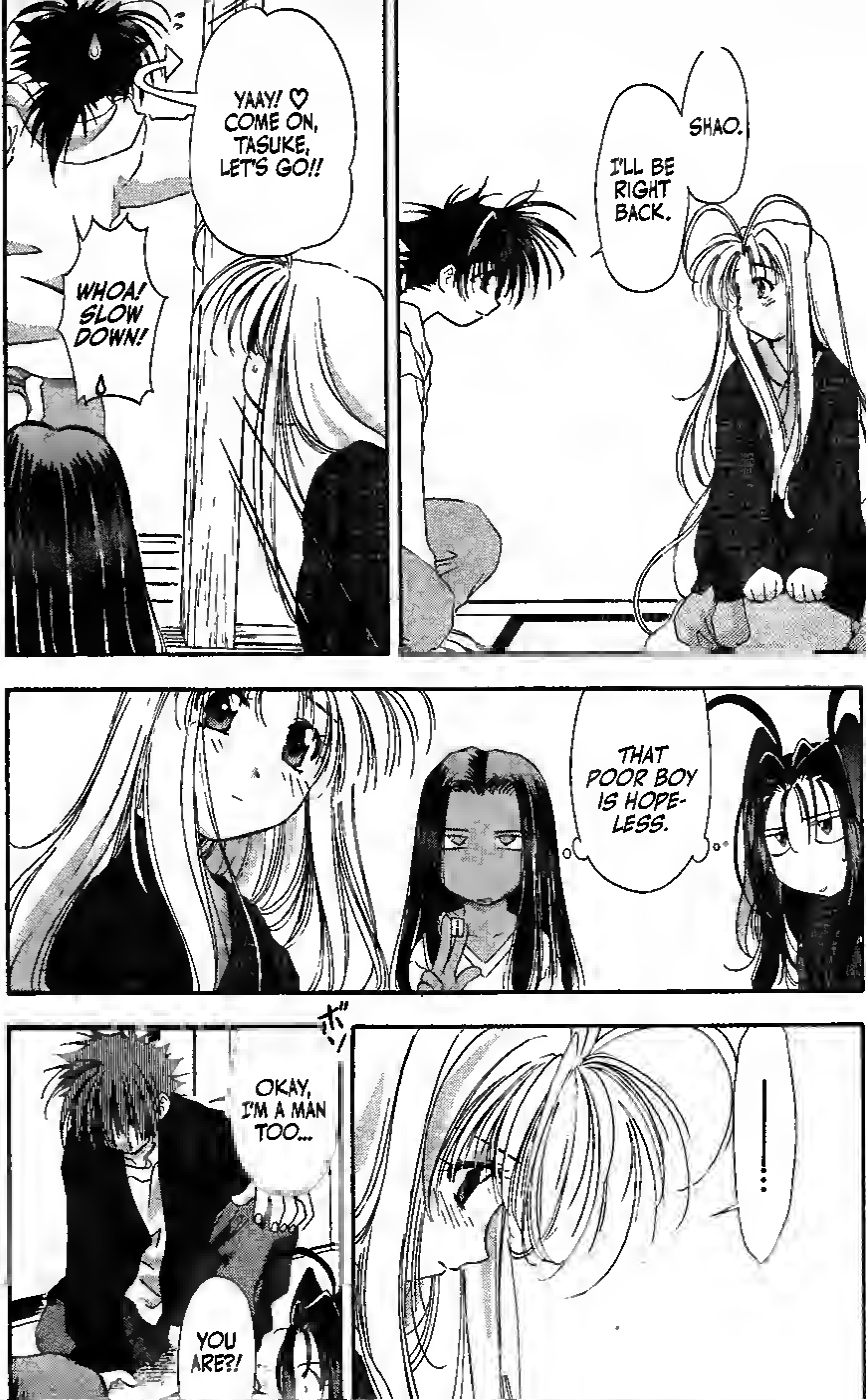
HERE'S YOUR PENGUIN. NOW YOU CAN CHILL OUT AND GIVE TASUKE A BREAK.

TASUKEEE...?
ガタン

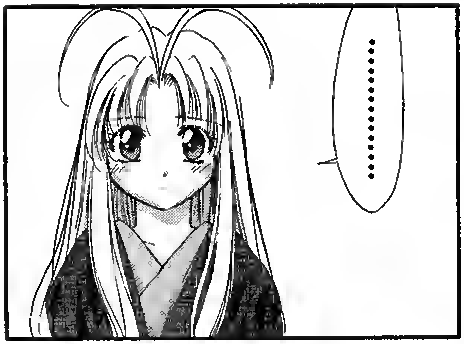
TASUKE WAS SUPPOSED TO GET IT FOR ME!
WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?!
!!!
YOU RUINED EVERY-THING!
WHY'D YOU HAVE TO GET IN THE WAY, TAKASHI?!
GO AWAY AND LEAVE ME ALONE!!
I'M SO VERY SORRY.
YES, YES.

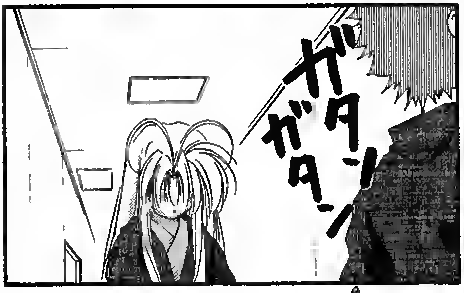
YUKA, FIRST LOVES AREN'T EASY.
AFTER ALL, THIS IS ALL NEW TO ME AND EVERY-ONE KEEPS GETTING IN MY WAY.
BUT SOMEHOW I'LL FIND A WAY TO MAKE MY HOROSCOPE COME TRUE.
I'M NOT GIVING UP YET!!
AAAH HOT SPRINGS ARE GREEAT


NO WAY! HOT SPRINGS MEAN KARAOKE!!
YOU CAN'T GO TO THE HOT SPRINGS WITHOUT PLAYING MAHJONG, RIGHT?
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HOT SPRINGS MANJYU
KNOWS HOW TO PLAY, BUT DOESN'T
DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY, BUT DOES
BETS WITH MANJYU
Ginkgo Room
COME ON, GUYS.
LET'S DO SOMETHING ELSE.
HEY, TASUKE ...
WANNA GO FOR A WALK? IT'S NO FUN WATCHING THEM PLAY.
SHAO.
I DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE WITH HER
THAT'S OKAY. LET'S JUST WATCH.
ACTUALLY, MAYBE THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO TELL HER.

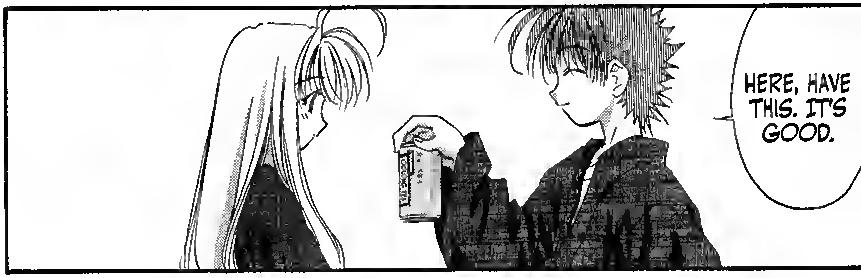

SHAO.
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
YAAY! ♡ COME ON, TASUKE, LET'S GO!!
WHOA! SLOW DOWN!
THAT POOR BOY IS HOPE-LESS.
!!!
OKAY, I'M A MAN TOO...
YOU ARE?!

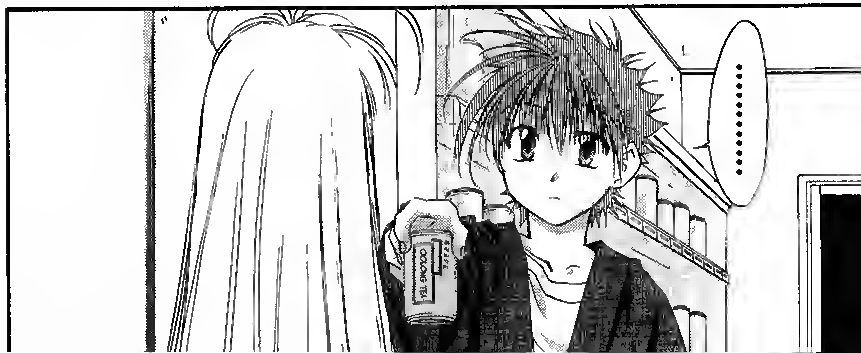
COME ON, SHAO, WE'RE GOING SOME-WHERE TOO!!
EEK!
だだだだだ
OH YOU KNOW, I JUST GO WITH THE FLOW
IT'S FAST WHEN YOU'RE AROUND
YOU'RE A LOT DIFFERENT THAN YOU WERE WHEN I FIRST MET YOU (I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE LATE).
SO TRUE.
THINGS ARE STARTING TO GET INTERESTING...





↑DOESN'T WAIT FOR AN ANSWER





WHAT'S THE MAT-TER?
ARE YOU MAD?
OOLONG TEA
HEY, YOU CAN TELL ME. IF SOMETHING'S BOTHERING YOU, IT'S BETTER TO GET IT OFF YOUR CHEST.

THAT ...
MAY I HAVE IT PLEASE?
I... KNOW.
IT'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU
OH? WHERE IS IT?
YEAH!!
WHA ...?
WHEN SHOULD I SAY IT? WHEN SHOULD I SAY IT? WHEN SHOULD I SAY IT?
HEEEY, WE COULD GO SOAK IN THE HOT SPRINGS TOGETHER.

OH, HE'S BUYING HER A DRINK.
WHEN SHOULD I SAY IT? WHEN SHOULD I SAY IT?

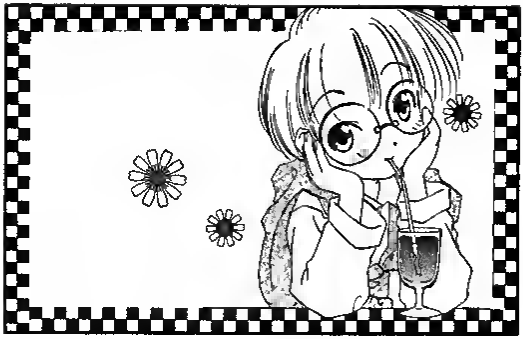
TASUKE, LET'S GO THIS WAY!!
HUH ?!
.....
MEH!
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?!

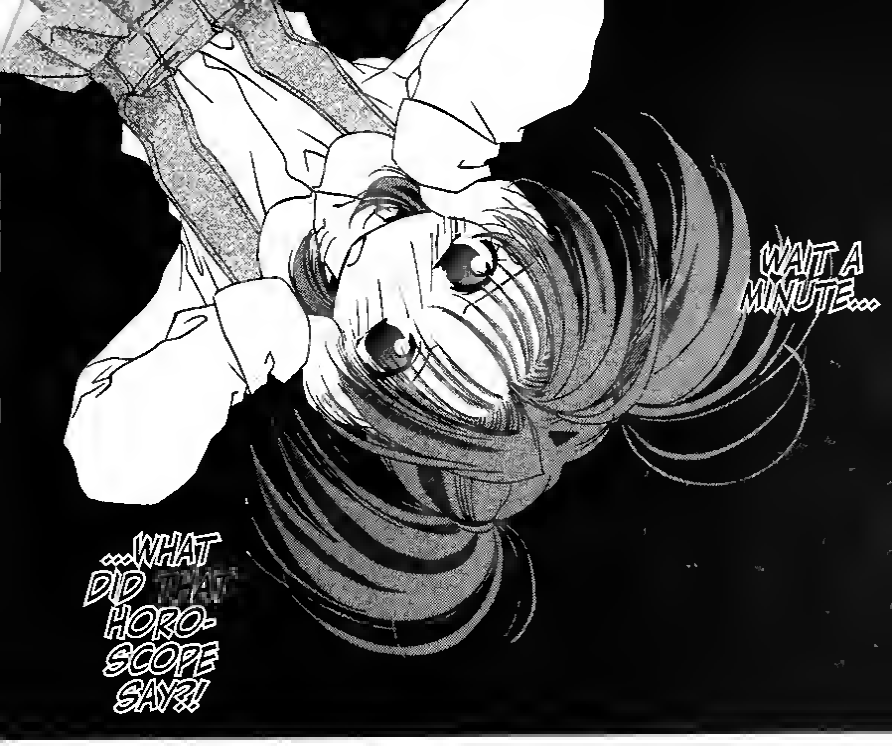
WELL, HE GOT ME A PENGUIN EARLIER, SO THERE!!
A PENGUIN'S WORTH WAY MORE THAN A DRINK--IT HAS TO BE!!
K-KAORI, JUST A...
YOU'RE THE WORST.
REEEAAALLY! WHY ARE YOU WITH SHAO ANYWAY?!!

HUH?
WAIT, WHY DO I CARE?!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?!!
AARGH!! YOU! YOU! GET OUT OF MY HEAD!
KAO-I...?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY BRAIN?!
WHYYY?!!!

WHY IS THIS HAPPEN-ING?!!
TELL ME WHY, YUKA!!
KYAOR!
ACK!
WHAT?! YOU'RE STILL IN HERE?!
HOW MANY TIMES DOES THAT MAKE TODAY?!
OH...MISS NINA...

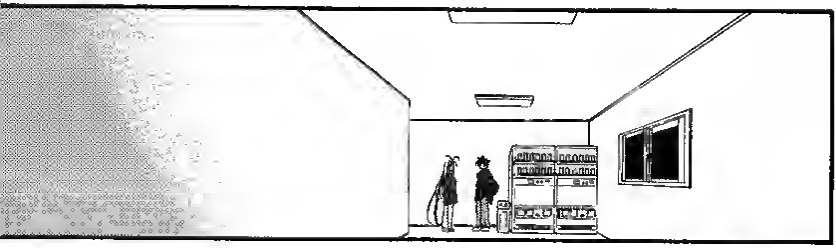
CHAPTER 66
THE WAVERING MAIDEN (PART 2)

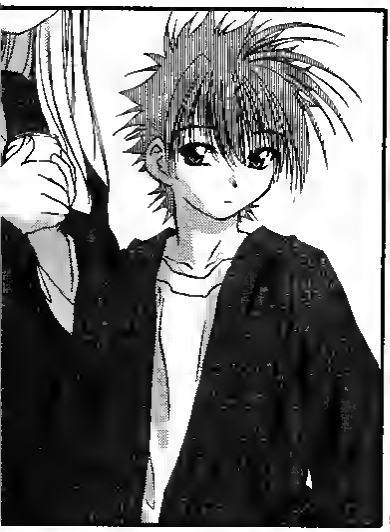




"...ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE A SECRET CRUSH!! DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE SELFISH TO GET YOUR SECRET LOVE'S ATTENTION." ♡

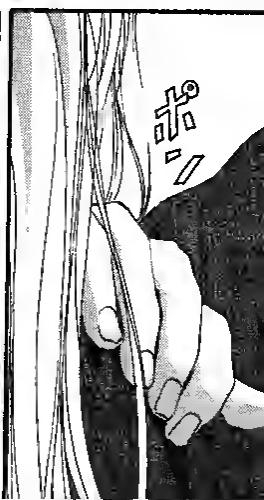
"FOR VIRGOS, THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR LOVE IN DECEMBER!! BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, YOUR DEEPEST DESIRES WILL FINALLY COME TRUE..."





!!

ISN'T THERE SOME-THING ...
...YOU WANT TO SAY...
...TO TASU-KE?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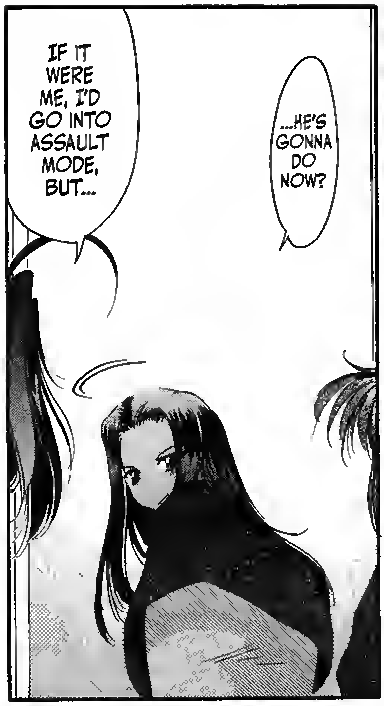
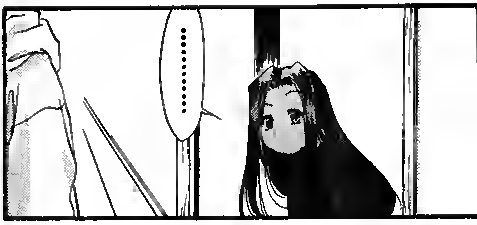
FOR THIS ...
...THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I'LL DO MY BEST!!
SIGH
I'M...
.....
...SO COOL

KAORI.
KAORI!! I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
PLEASE LISTEN...
HEY, WHERE'RE YOU GOING?!
とぼとぼ
ブツ ブツ ブツ
.....
I...
WHAT AM I, THEN?

!!!
MASTER...
.....

GINKGO ROOM
SHAO?
ROOM ASSIGNMENTS
SHE WENT SOMEWHERE WITH YOUR CRACKHEAD FRIEND.
THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT YOU, TASUKE!
CRACK-HEAD!
(L.O.)
ROOM ASSIGNMENTS
WHY IS THIS TAKING US SO LONG TO WORK OUT?
HOW ABOUT YOU, TASUKE? WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT THE ROOM SITUATION?
ARE YOU ONLY STAYING WITH THAT RABBIT GIRL?
BECAUSE MISS RUIAN KEEPS COMPLAINING ABOUT EVERY THING...
WHAT ABOUT THE ROOM ASSIGN-MENTSSS?
IT'S OKAY. I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT...
PROBABLY BECAUSE HER HAIR BOUNCES LIKE BUNNY EARS. THOSE RUIAN.
WHY RABBIT GIRL?
.....
AND I AM...?
WHAT MISSTEN?


IF IT WERE ME, I'D GO INTO ASSAULT MODE, BUT...
...HE'S GONNA DO NOW?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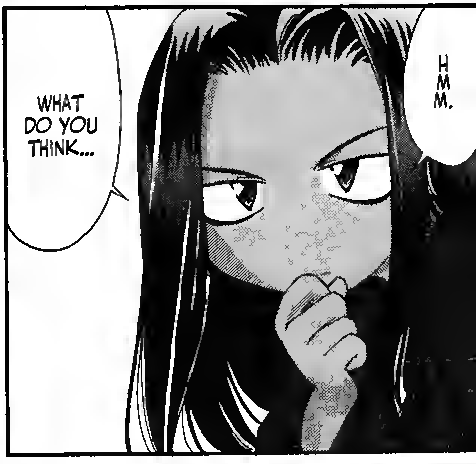
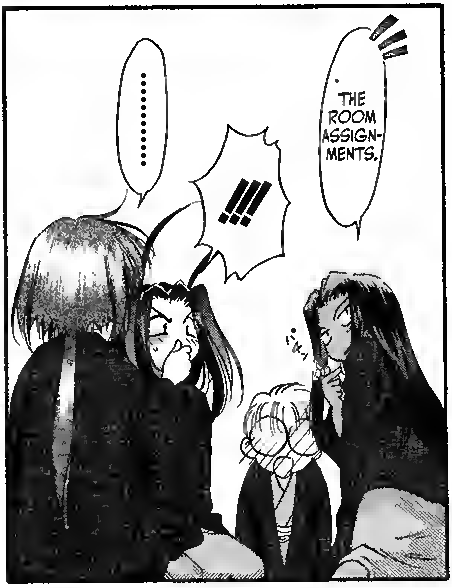

WHAT DO YOU THINK...
HMM.


.....
!!!
THE ROOM ASSIGN-MENTS.

NOW WOULD BE AN APPRO-PRIATE TIME TO LAUNCH AN ASSAULT.
IT IS TRUE.

WAAAH. WHAT SHOULD I DO?
TAKASHI IS...
...IN MY HEART AND...
OOH, I AAAM...
FRIENDSHIP AND LOOOVE...
...AND...
OOH. ♪ I'M SO COOOL! ♫

HEY! WHO'S OVER THERE?!!
I'M SORRY YOU DON'T LIKE MY SINGING.
AND I WAS JUST GETTING TO THE GOOD PART...
I CAN'T THINK WITH YOUR TERRIBLE SINGING!!
I WONDERED WHAT WAS GOING ON!!
KAORI?!
OH d
!!!

I THOUGHT YOU WERE WITH SHAO!
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, IS IT?!
NO, IT'S NOT!!
ちぇっ
……
MAYBE IT'S NONE OF MY BUSI-NESS...
……
...BUT...

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ...
...ABOUT SHAO?
BUT SHE'S KIND OF CLUELESS. MAYBE THAT PART THE MOST.
HUH?
OH, I GUESS I LIKE HOW SHE'S SO CUTE.
PLUS SHE'S STRONG AND A GREAT COOK.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, KAORI?

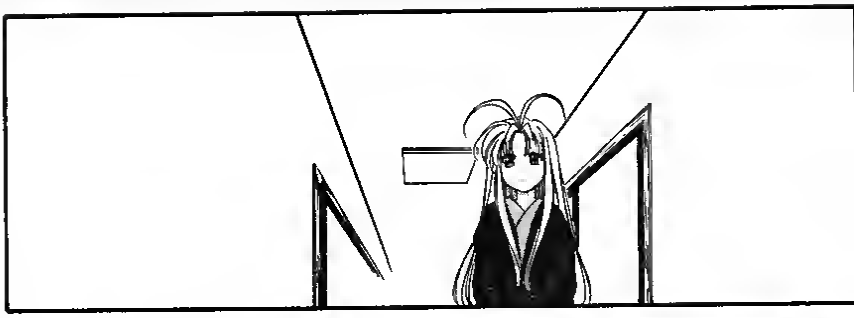
TAKASHI...
.....
I DO LIKE TASUKE, RIGHT?
ME...
.....
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, IS IT?!
HMPH.
WELL...
I'M SURE IF YOU TRY YOUR HARD-EST...
...YOU CAN WIN HIM OVER.
I GOT YOUR BACK, SO DON'T GIVE UP.

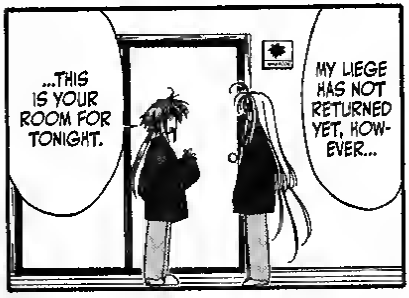
OH... THAT'S RIGHT.
TAKASHI...
DON'T YOU GIVE UP EITHER!
...IS LIKE A BIG BROTHER.
OF COURSE! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?!!
RIGHT...
I WISH...
I WANT TO SAY IT.
.....
...I COULD SAY IT.
BUT I CAN'T!
ガタ ガタ ガタ
WAAH!

MISS KIRYUU ...
I'M SORRY.
.....
I'M... STUPID.
MR. TAKASHI ...
I'M SORRY.

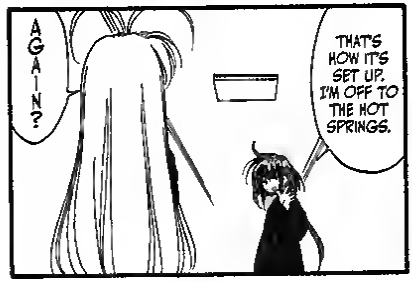
HUFF
COME ON, TASUKE!!
SHAO...
HUFF
WHY CAN'T I JUST GROW UP ALREADY?!!
WHY AM I SO PA-THETIC?
WHY CAN'T YOU JUST TELL HER?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

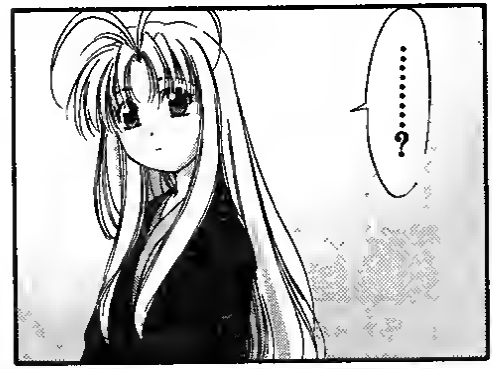
I'M...
...STUPID.
.....




...THIS IS YOUR ROOM FOR TONIGHT.
MY LIEGE HAS NOT RETURNED YET, HOWEVER...

OOH, MISS SHAO.


AGAIN?
THAT'S HOW IT'S SET UP. I'M OFF TO THE HOT SPRINGS.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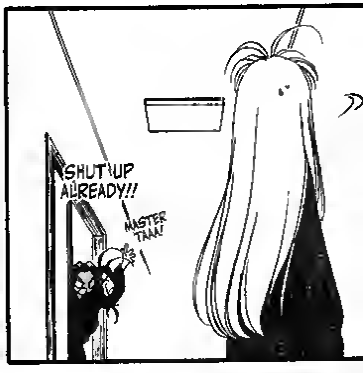

SHUT UP ALREADY!!
MASTER TAAA!

THERE, THAT'S YOUR ROOM.
NANA, WHY YOU'D JUST...?
NOW I'M EVEN MORE PATHETIC
DON'T ASK QUESTIONS! EVERYTHING'S ALREADY WORKED OUT. IF YOU KEEP BEING INDECISIVE, I'LL TELL EVERYONE ABOUT THAT THING.
WHAT HING?!
ENOUGH ALREADY! GET IN THERE!!
WHOOAA!!

WHAT ...?
I'M IN HERE?
NNGH
KOKUTENTOU...
YEP. WE'RE BUNKING TOGETHER! ♡
LIMM, I WANTED TO BE WITH TASUKE...
WHAAT? NO WAY. I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE ACTUALLY SERIOUS.
EEK!
OI' NANA DID IT AGAIN, EH?
WOO☆
SORRY.
I DO CARE ABOUT MY LITTLE BROTHER.
IF YOU INTEND TO STEAL HIM AWAY, YOU'LL HAVE TO TRY HARDER.
YOU'RE LYING, LIAR! YOU'RE JUST DOING THIS FOR FUN! THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D DO THIS FOR MASTER TAI!!

SIS, WAAIIT!
OH, WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, RABBIT GIRL?!
ACK! HOW'D YOU UNTIE THAT, RUUAN?!
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

I DON'T LIKE THAT.
TASUKE AND SHAO ARE IN THE SAME ROOM AGAIN.

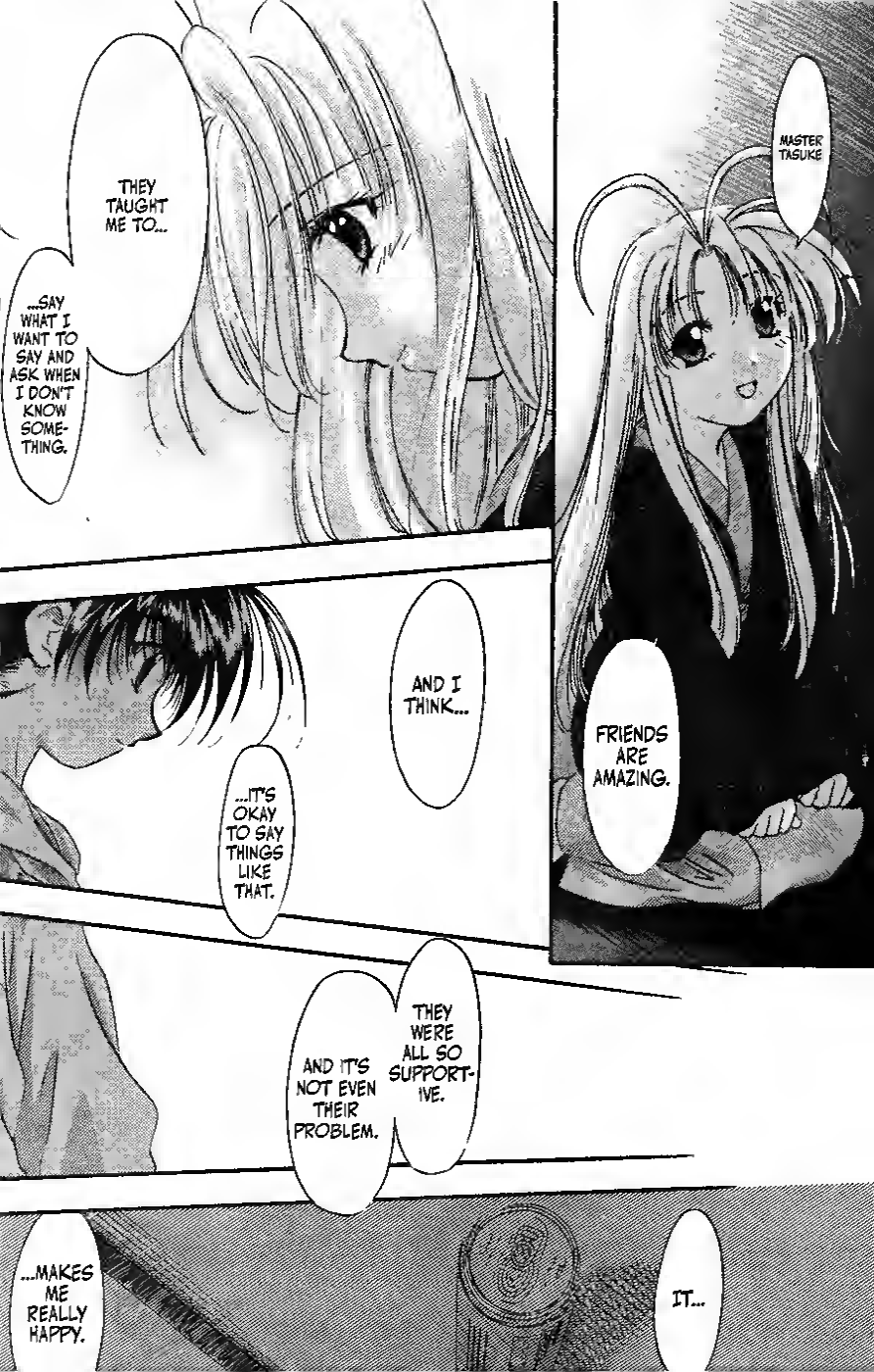
BUT...

WHAT DO I LIKE ABOUT TASUKE?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, KAORI?

そろ
OH, TH-THE LIGHTS...
MAYBE I SHOULD TUR THEM ON.
I...
.....
I...
UMM... MASTER TASUKE...
TA
TMUMP!!

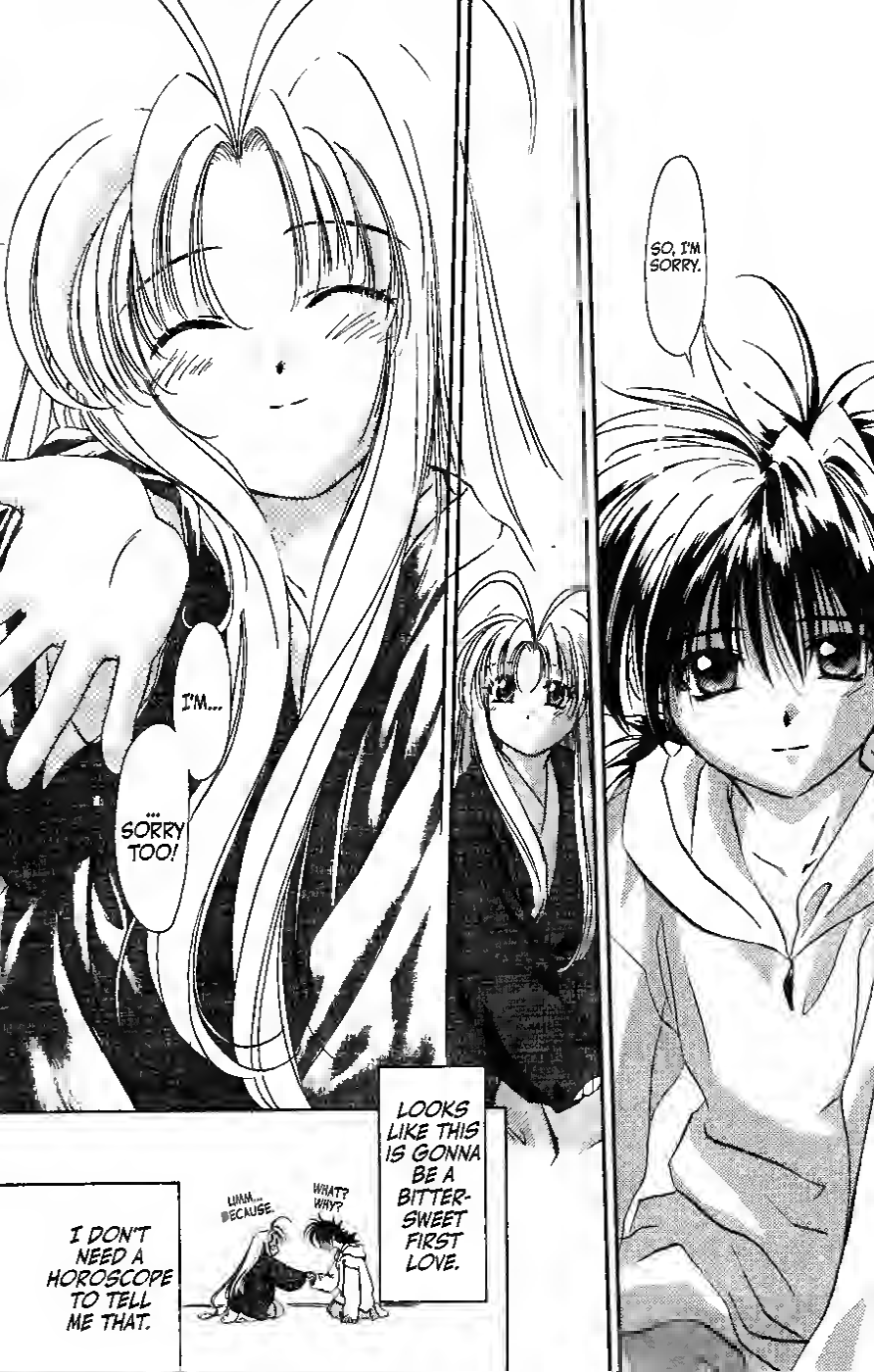
MASTER TASUKE...
I DON'T WANT YOU AND MISS KAORI...
...TO SHARE A ROOM.
YOU CAN'T STAY TO-GETHER.
I DON'T WANT YOU...
...TO STAY WITH HER.

I TRIED REALLY HARD.
I SAID IT. ♡
I DID IT.
.....


MASTER TASUKE
FRIENDS ARE AMAZING.
AND I THINK...
...IT'S OKAY TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.
THEY TAUGHT ME TO...
...SAY WHAT I WANT TO SAY AND ASK WHEN I DON'T KNOW SOME-THING.
THEY WERE ALL SO SUPPORT-IVE.
AND IT'S NOT EVEN THEIR PROBLEM.
IT...
...MAKES ME REALLY HAPPY.

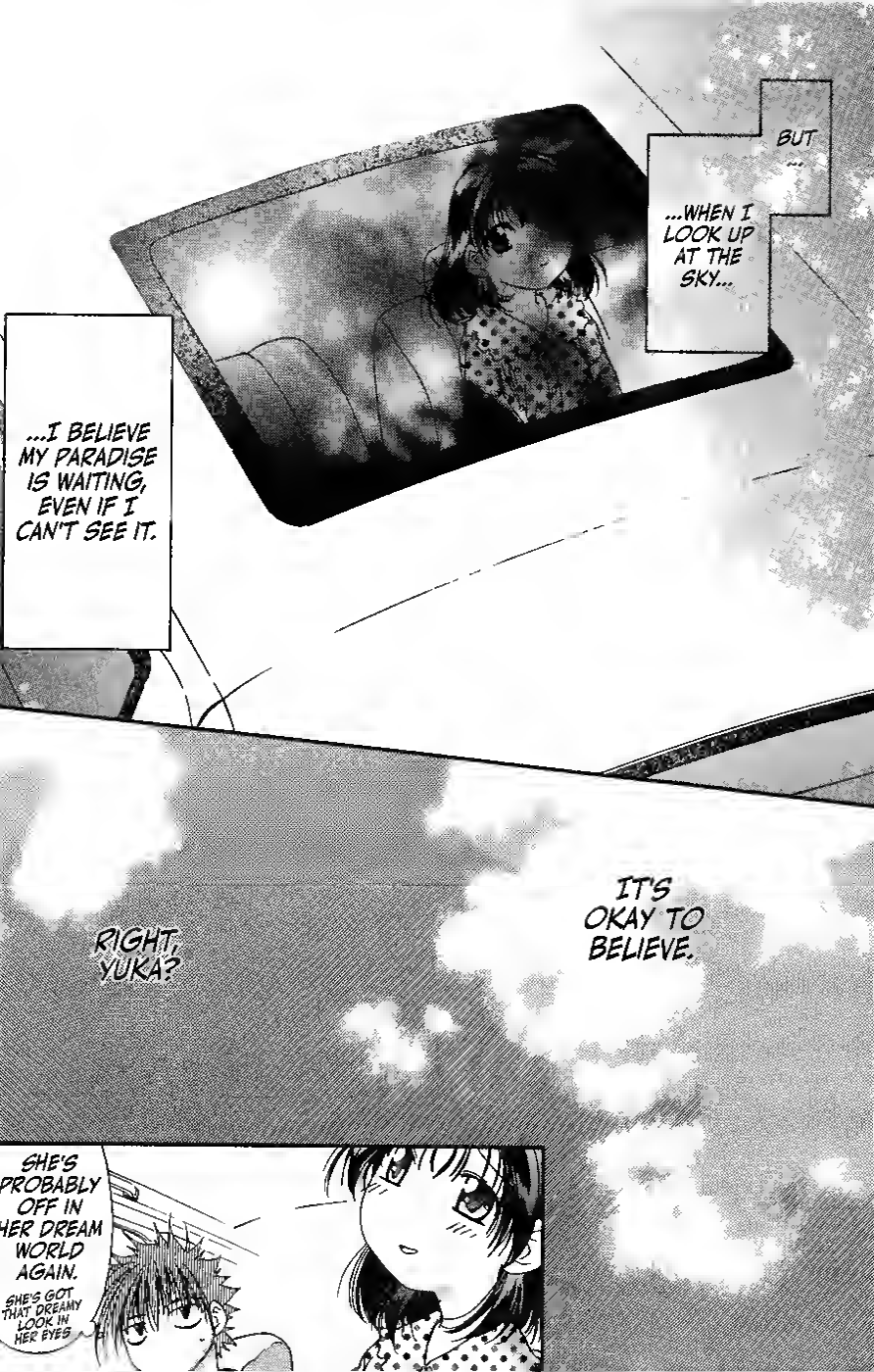
I'M GLAD I WAS ABLE TO TELL YOU.
SIIGH...
SORRY.

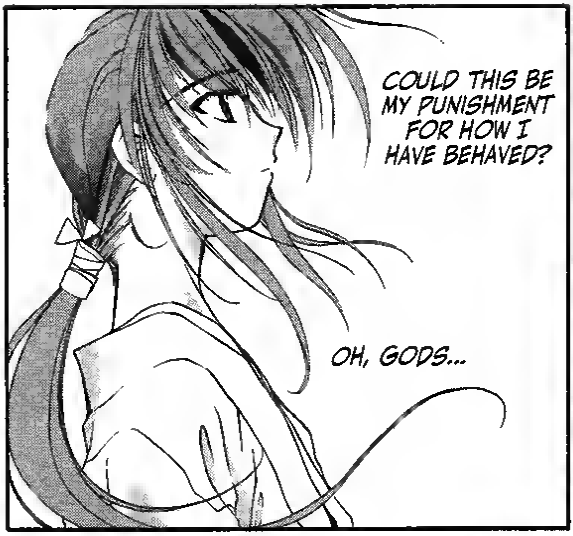
I'M SORRY.
SHAO, YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND TOO.
YOU CAN SEE WHAT'S IMPORTANT AROUND YOU.
I WAS... ...SO CAUGHT UP IN MYSELF...
...I DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT HOW I WAS AFFECTING THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.
I... ...WASN'T THINK-ING...
...ABOUT HOW I WAS MAKING YOU FEEL EITHER.


SO, I'M SORRY.
I'M...
...SORRY TOO!
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS GONNA BE A BITTER-SWEET FIRST LOVE.
I DON'T NEED A HOROSCOPE TO TELL ME THAT.
UHHH... BECAUSE.
WHAT? WHY?

IF HE LIKED ME...
I THINK IT'D BE SO NICE TO WRAP UP WITH HIM...
...LIKE A WARM, COZY BLANKET.
TO ANSWER YOUR QUES-TION, TAKASHI.
I LIKE HOW TASUKE IS KIND.
HEY!! WHAT ABOUT ME?! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE!
MMMORE MMMANJYUU...
...MY HEART WOULD SOAR TO HEAVEN OR SOMETHING.
HMPH. IMPROVISED PLANS NEVER WORK OUT RIGHT, DO THEY?
BUT THEY ARE MAKING PROGRESS. ONE STEP AT A TIME.

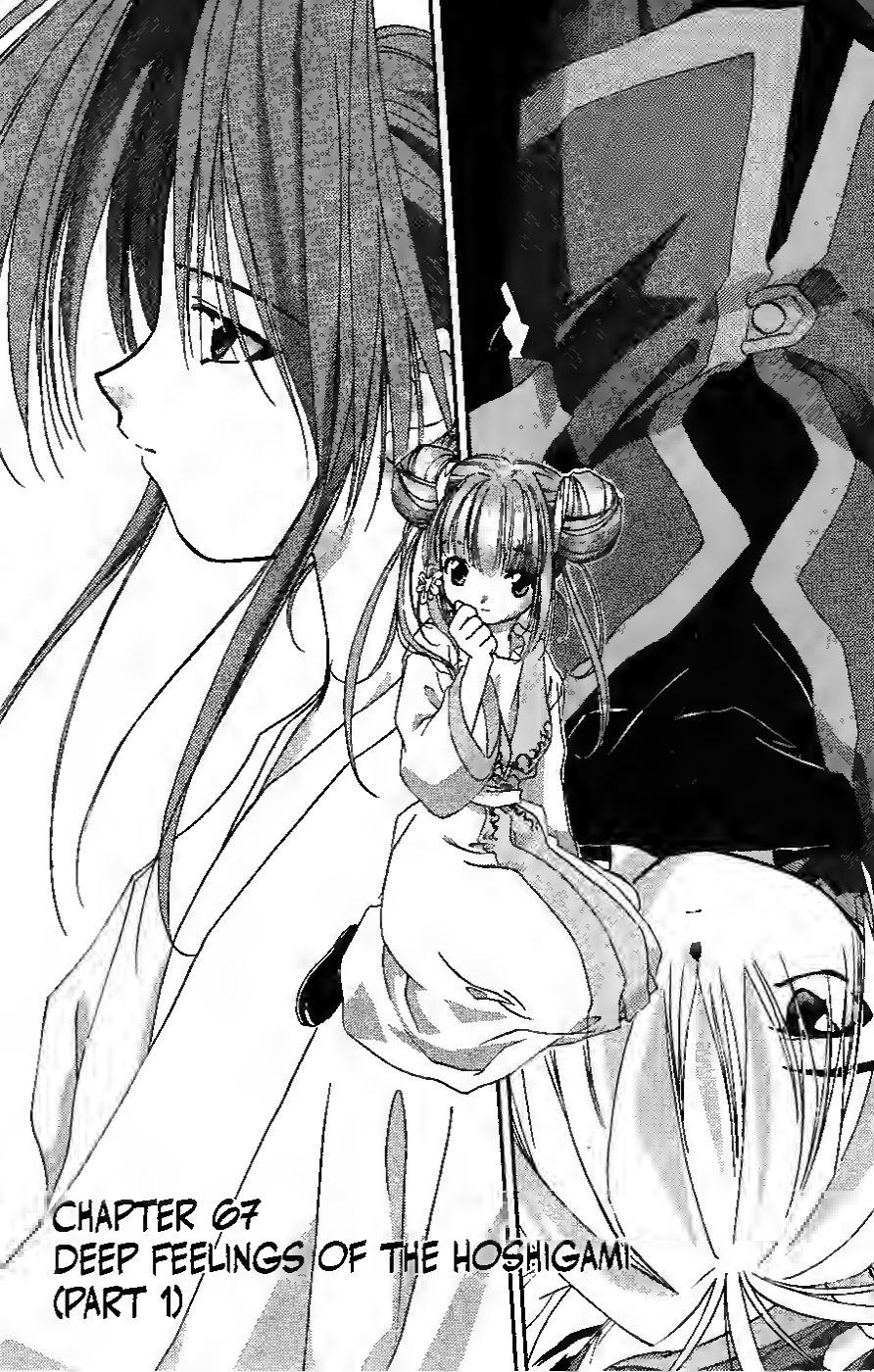
HEY, YUKA.
I TRIED TO BE SELFISH, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK.
I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO BE IN HIS ROOM.
TASUKE AND SHAO GOT TO STAY TOGETHER!!
YOU'RE NOT NORMAL.
YOU'RE GOING TO TURN INTO A PRUNE
OOOH.. HOT SPRINGS ...
I WANT TO STAY IN THE SAME ROOM AS YOOU...
NO.
AHHH! KAORI, WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
BACKUP SINGER (SPARE)
I TRIED, BUT I COULDN'T MAKE THE HORO-SCOPE COME TRUE.


BUT ...
...WHEN I LOOK UP AT THE SKY...
...I BELIEVE MY PARADISE IS WAITING, EVEN IF I CAN'T SEE IT.
IT'S OKAY TO BELIEVE.
RIGHT, YUKA?
SHE'S PROBABLY OFF IN HER DREAM WORLD AGAIN.
SHE'S GOT THAT DREAMY LOOK IN HER EYES

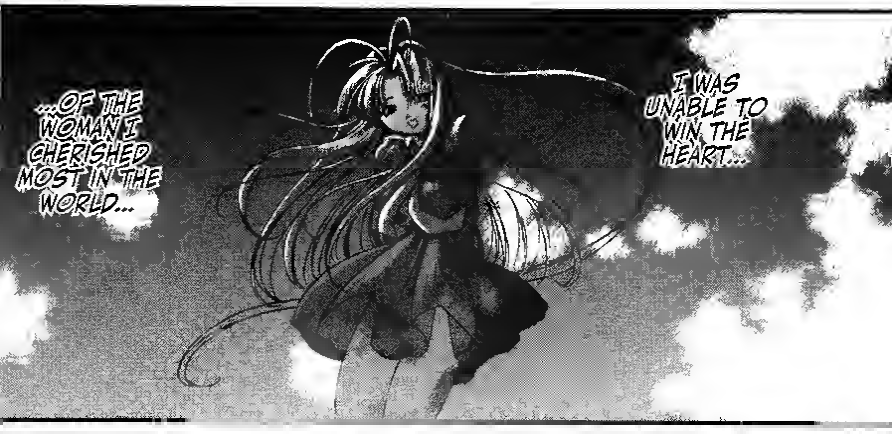

COULD THIS BE MY PUNISHMENT FOR HOW I HAVE BEHAVED?
OH, GODS...

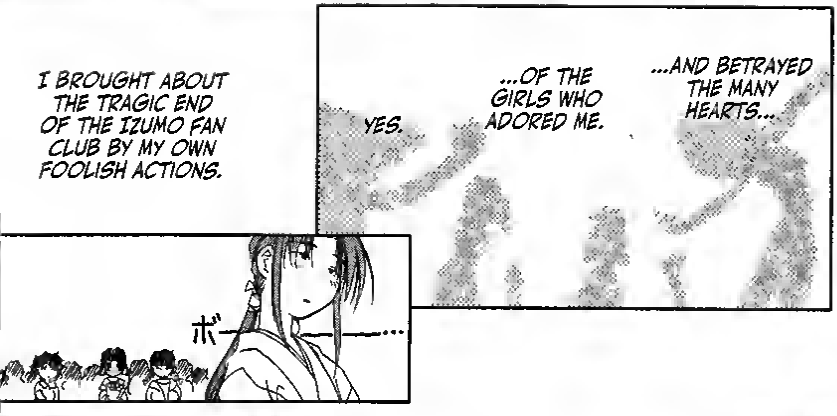
...I...

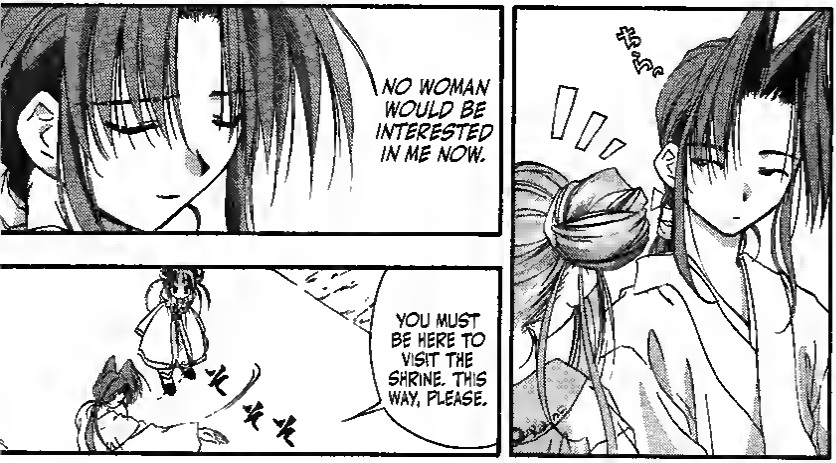
WHO... ARE YOU?
THAT CRAZY GIRL! WHAT IN THE HECK...
...IS SHE UP TO?



CHAPTER 67
DEEP FEELINGS OF THE HOSHIGAMI (PART 1)

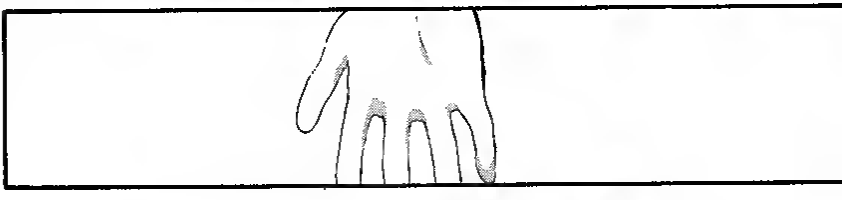

...OF THE WOMAN I CHERISHED MOST IN THE WORLD...
I WAS UNABLE TO WIN THE HEART...


I BROUGHT ABOUT THE TRAGIC END OF THE IZUMO FAN CLUB BY MY OWN FOOLISH ACTIONS.
YES.
...OF THE GIRLS WHO ADORED ME.
...AND BETRAYED THE MANY HEARTS...
ボー――――…

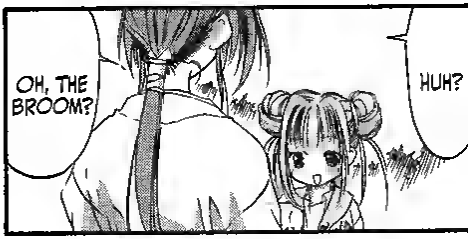

NO WOMAN WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ME NOW.
ちゅっ
YOU MUST BE HERE TO VISIT THE SHRINE. THIS WAY, PLEASE.

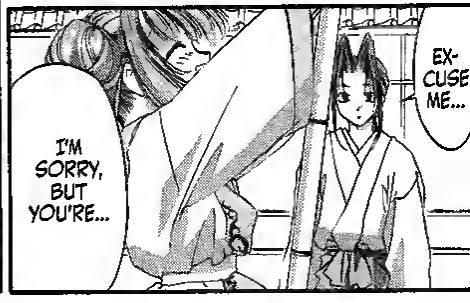
AND WHY DID I HAVE TO COME ALONG?!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M DOING HERE!!

WHERE'D SHE COME UP WITH SUCH A RIDICULOUS PLAN ANYWAY?



WHAT'S SHE TRYING TO DO...

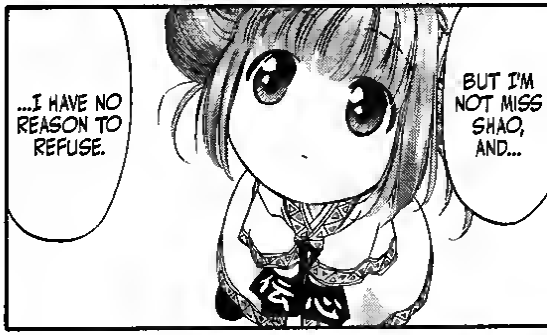

OH, THE BROOM?
HUH?


I'M SORRY, BUT YOU'RE...
EX-CUSE ME...

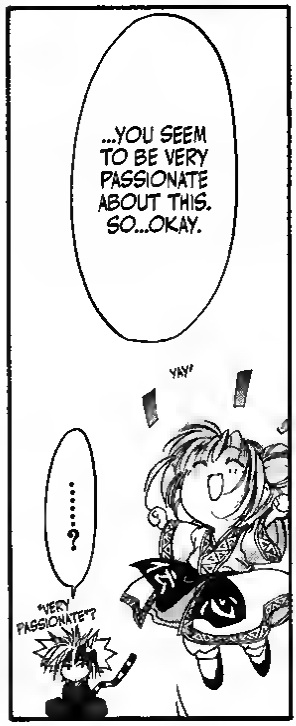
ONE WEEK AGO...
HMM... I SEE.
HMM. YES, YES. I SEE.
GET IT?
UH-OH.
I UNDER-STAND.
...MAKE THE LADY GETTEN TOTALLY PISSED AT US?!!

THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
I DON'T THINK MISS SHAO WOULD AGREE TO THAT.
SHE GOT IT ON THE FIRST TRY.
GOTTA WATCH OUT FOR THIS LADY.

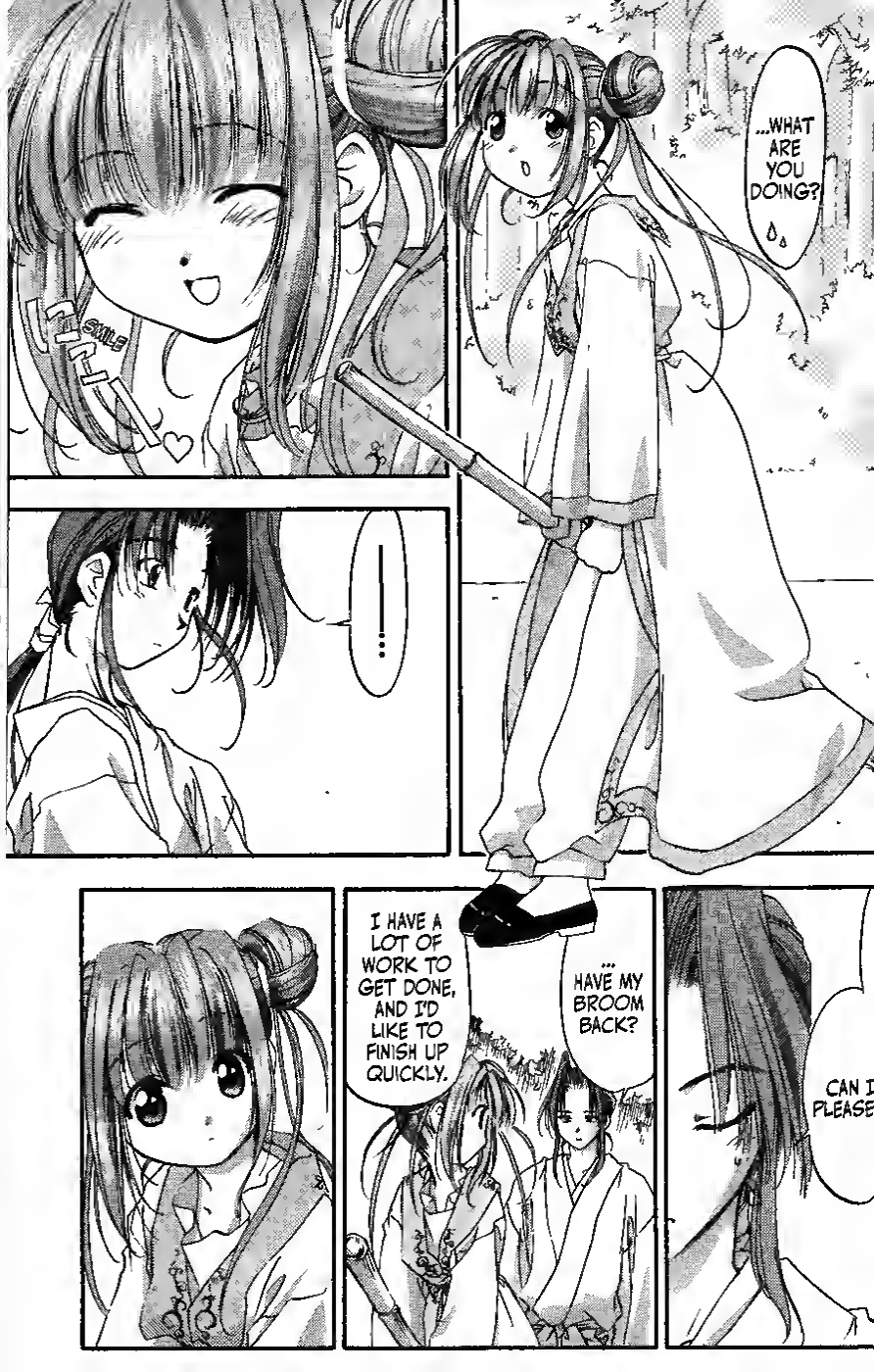
SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU WANT ME TO MAKE YOU BIG, CORRECT?
!!
SOMEHOW DECIPHERED RISHU'S DRAWINGS

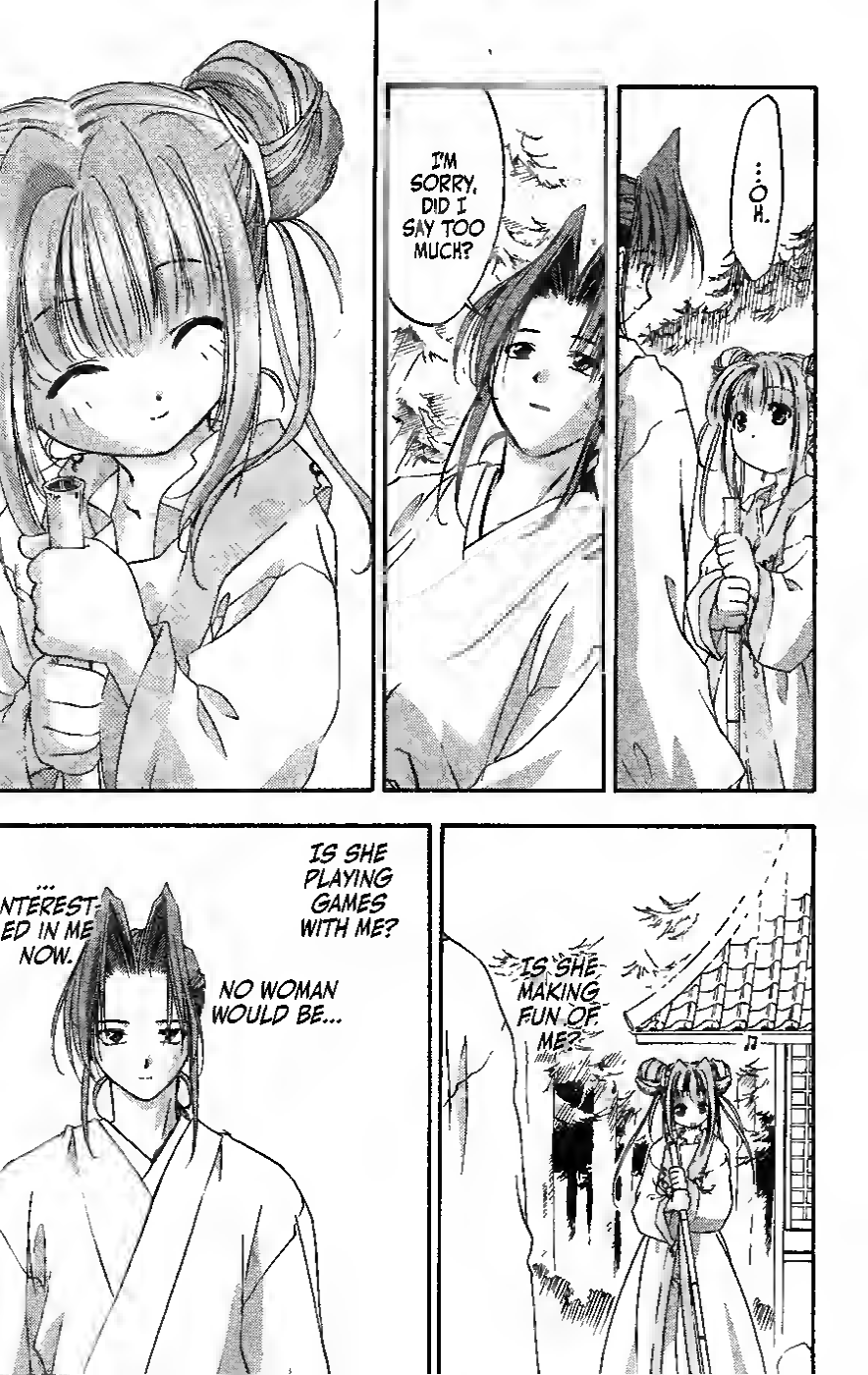

BUT I'M NOT MISS SHAO, AND...
...I HAVE NO REASON TO REFUSE.

IT'S ONLY NATURAL YOU WOULD WANT TO SEE WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE BIG.
AND...


...YOU SEEM TO BE VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS. SO...OKAY.
YAY!
.....?
"VERY PASSIONATE"?

MR. KOHON, WHAT WILL YOU DO?
はっ!!
SO...WHY DID I HAVE TO COME ALONG?
WELL...
I'M NOT HALF BAD BIG, THOUGH.
EXCUSE ME...I'M SORRY, BUT...


...WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SMILE
!!!
CAN I PLEASE
...HAVE MY BROOM BACK?
I HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO GET DONE, AND I'D LIKE TO FINISH UP QUICKLY.

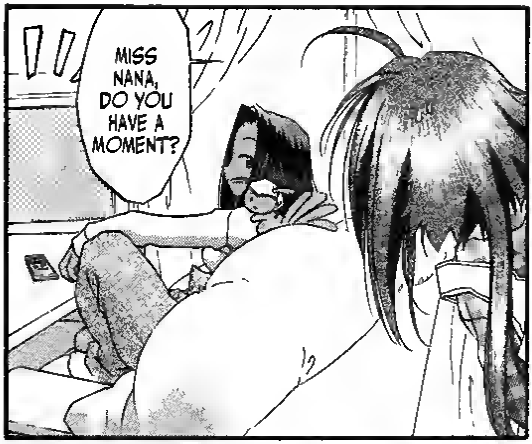

...OH.
I'M SORRY. DID I SAY TOO MUCH?
IS SHE MAKING FUN OF ME?
NO WOMAN WOULD BE...
IS SHE PLAYING GAMES WITH ME?
...NTEREST-ED IN ME NOW.

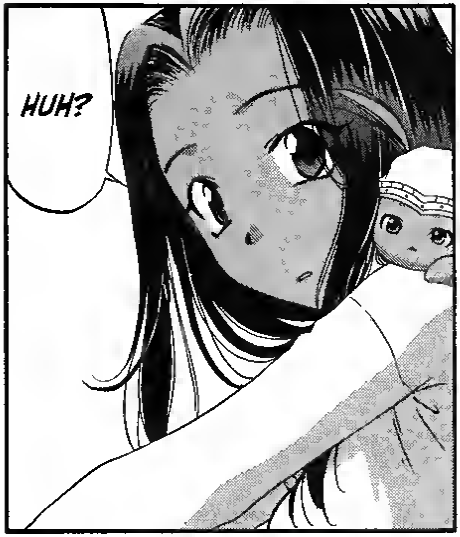
WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE WITH ME?
ACK!
OOH...
WHAT AM I DOING?
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!!

LET'S GO!!
HEY!
GOOD AFTER-NOON, MR. IZUMO.
WHEW. CLOSE. TOO CLOSE.

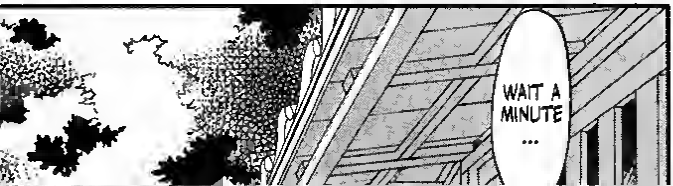
MISS... SHAO-RIN.
MR. IZUMO, HAVE YOU SEEN RISHU AND KOHON?
WHAT...?
NO, I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT THEM. THEY DIDN'T ANSWER WHEN I CALLED.
HEY.
THEY DISAP-PEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN.
RUUAN AND KIRYUU SAID THEY DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING.
BIG SIS KIRYUU'S THE BEST!! CAN I CALL YOU SIS?
LET'S KEEP LOOKING. WE HAVEN'T CHECKED SHOUKO'S HOUSE YET.
YES.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU, MR. IZUMO!

RISHU.
IF WE GO BACK NOW, WE WON'T GET IN AS MUCH TROUBLE.
RIIGHT?
RISHU?


MISS NANA, DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?


HUH?

MY APOLOGIES, MISS RISHU AND MR. KOHON!!
I CAN'T RELAX UNTIL I TELL SOMEONE. TELLING ONE PERSON IS PROBABLY ALL RIGHT, IS IT NOT?

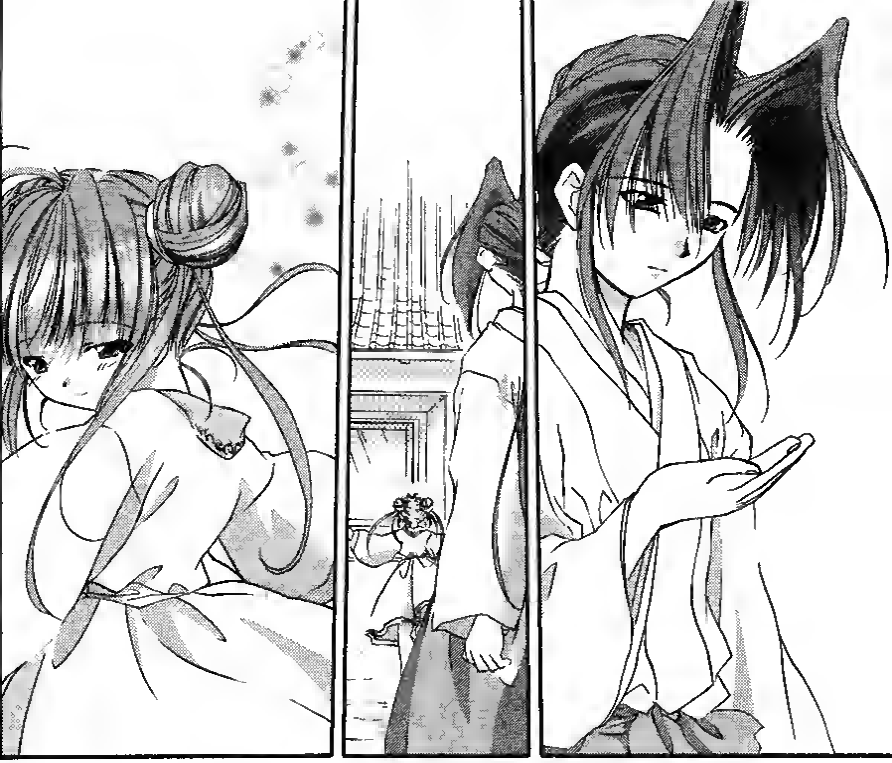

WAIT A MINUTE ...

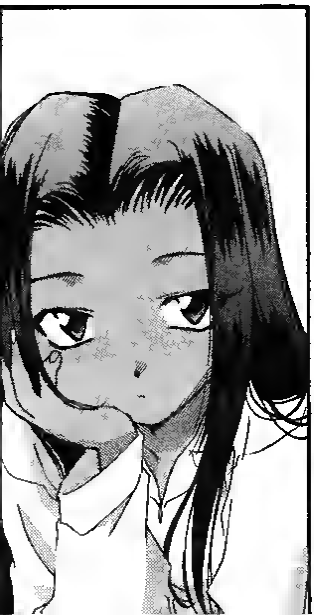
SO THIS IS THE PASSION THAT BIG SIS KIRYUU WAS TALKING ABOUT ...
HMMM...
... COULD YOU?
YOU COULDN'T BE WORRIED ABOUT HIM...
.....
IS THIS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LADY GETTEN?
THAT HUMAN HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH US.
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT AND ACT ACCORDING TO OUR DUTIES.

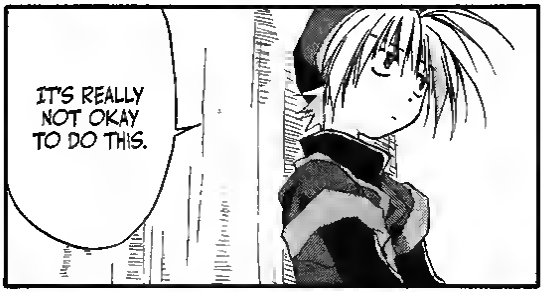
I GUESS YOU DON'T CARE...
...THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH US.
HUH, WELL, SHE DOES MAKE A FINE-LOOKING LADY. ♡

AH HA HA HA HA! YOU CAN CALL ME NANA OR SIS. DON'T BE A STRANGER!!
HEY, KID'S SISTER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
HOW ARE THEY SO DIFFERENT?
HER AND THE KID
AH HA HA HA! YOU'RE NOT SO BAD YOURSELF, KIDDO!
LITTLE...TIGER BOY?
HEY NOW.....
DON'T ASK ME...
HEY, THAT'S WHAT I ASKED YOU.
SO, WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
HY, AREN'T YOU A STRAPPING YOUNG MAN

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!
DON'T LAUGH AT ME.
WHAT... THIS IS FOR ME?
BWA HA!!
HER AND KENEN COME HERE A LOT TO EAT SWEETS. SHE MUST HAVE GROWN ATTACHED TO HIM.
OH, NO. HE'S USED TO BEING MADE FUN OF. HE LIKES IT.
YOU'RE DELU-SIONAL.
SO IZUMO GOES FOR THE LITTLE SQUIRTS TOO!
ISN'T THAT A BIT HARSH?
LITTLE SQUIRTS ARE OFF LIMITS, RIGHT?





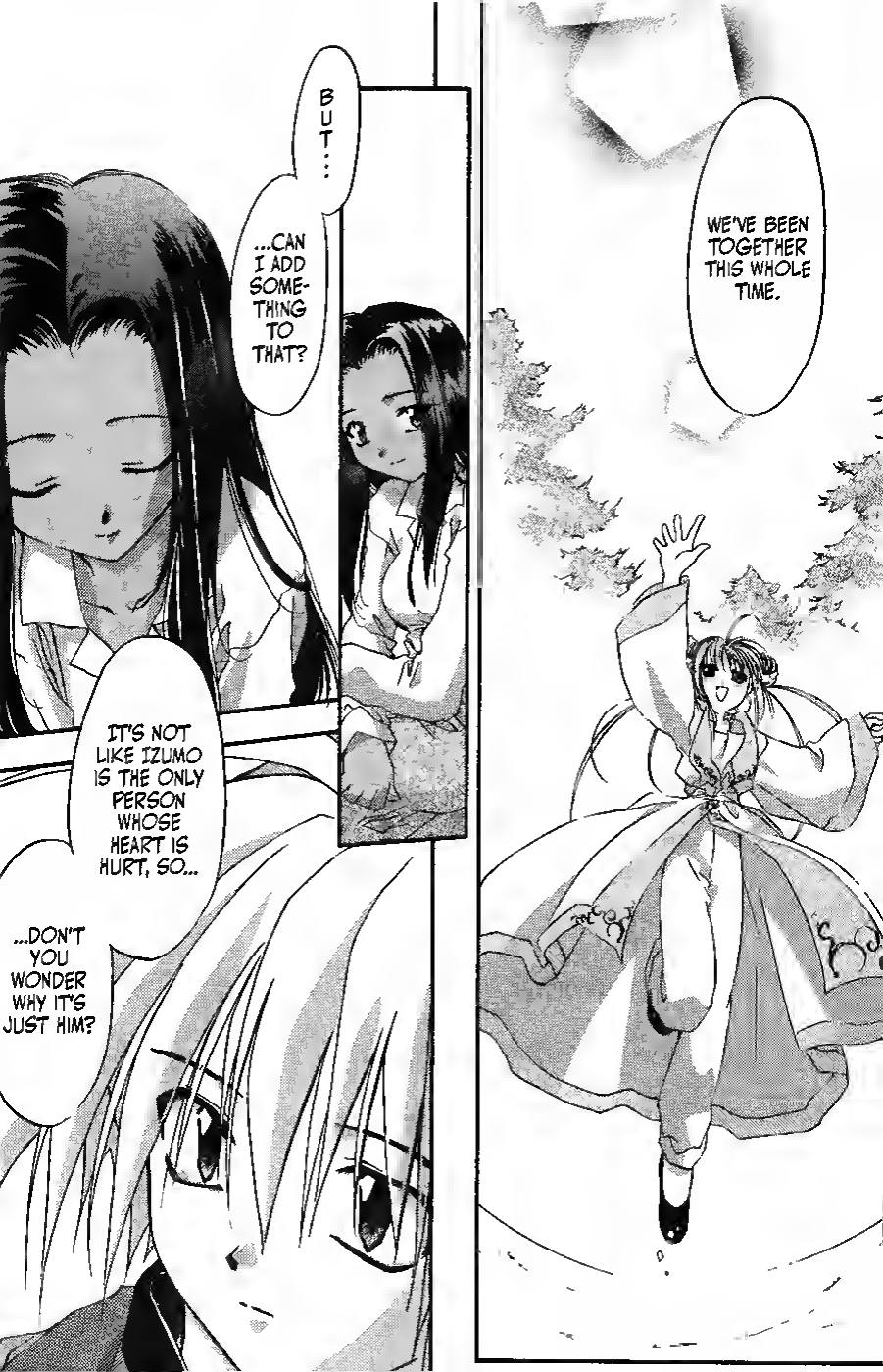

IT'S REALLY NOT OKAY TO DO THIS.

RISHU SHOULD KNOW THAT.
IF WE'RE NOT SERVING THE LADY GETTEN OR HER MASTER, THEN WE'RE JUST GOOFING OFF.

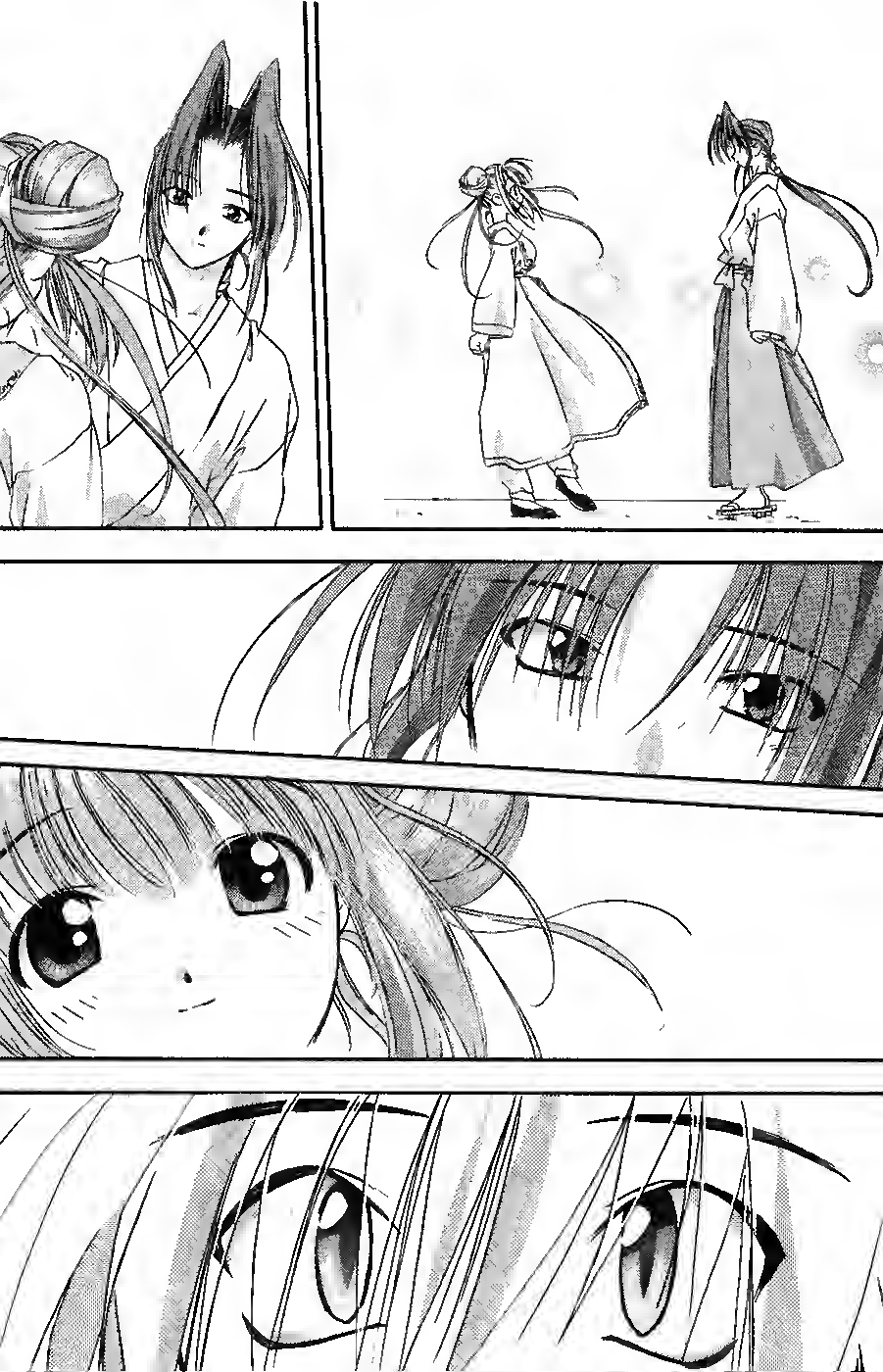
I DON'T KNOW HOW SERIOUS YOUR DUTIES ARE, BUT...
...I'M SURE IT'S OKAY IF YOU HAVE A LITTLE FUN ON YOUR OWN.
ISN'T THAT OKAY?
.....
I...
...GUESS... MAYBE
IS THAT HOW YOU RESPOND ...
...TO WHAT YOUR MASTER'S BIG SISTER SAYS?

...KINDNESS THAT I FEEL FROM HER...
THIS...
...WITHOUT A DROP OF FALSENESS...
THAT SMILE...
DO YOU KNOW WHAT RISHU'S POWERS ARE?
THIS CHILD IS TRULY...

THE COMMUNICATION OF EMOTIONS.
TO COMMUNICATE EMOTIONS, FIRST YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY FEEL.
ESSENTIALLY, AS LONG AS SHE UNDERSTANDS HOW LADY GETTEN'S MASTER FEELS, THEN SHE DOESN'T NEED TO KNOW HOW ANYONE ELSE DOES. BUT...
...SHE...
...FEELS EVERYONE'S EMOTIONS SO MUCH IT HURTS.
I SEE
YOU KNOW RISHU PRETTY WELL, DON'T YOU?
WELL...


WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER THIS WHOLE TIME.
BUT...
...CAN I ADD SOME-THING TO THAT?
IT'S NOT LIKE IZUMO IS THE ONLY PERSON WHOSE HEART IS HURT, SO...
...DON'T YOU WONDER WHY IT'S JUST HIM?

MISTHER IZUMO'S HOUSE! MISTHER IZUMO'S HOUSE!
WHY DO I ALWAYS GET DRAGGED ALONG?
WOW.
MISHTHER IZUMO.
YOU SURE LIKE DRAWING IZUMO, DON'T YOU?



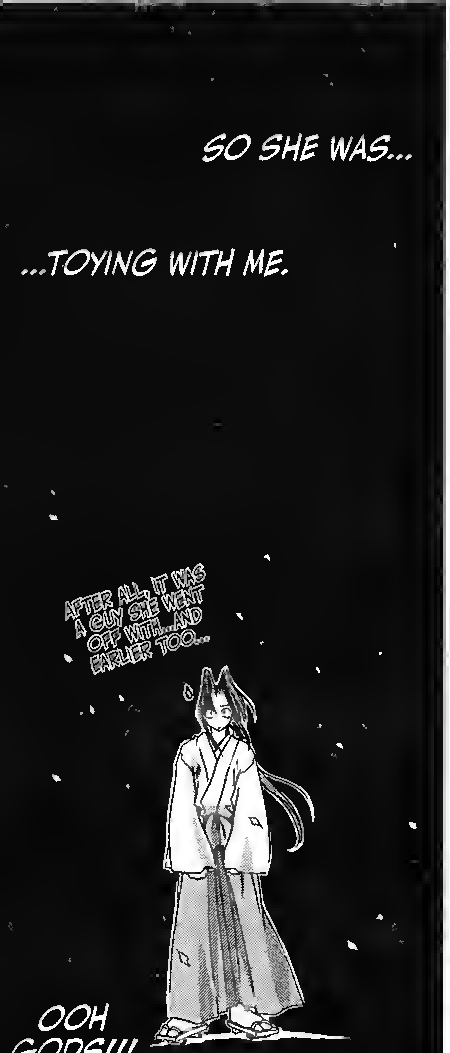
MISS...
OOH?!!
ARE THEY ABOUT TO K--
BLEH!!

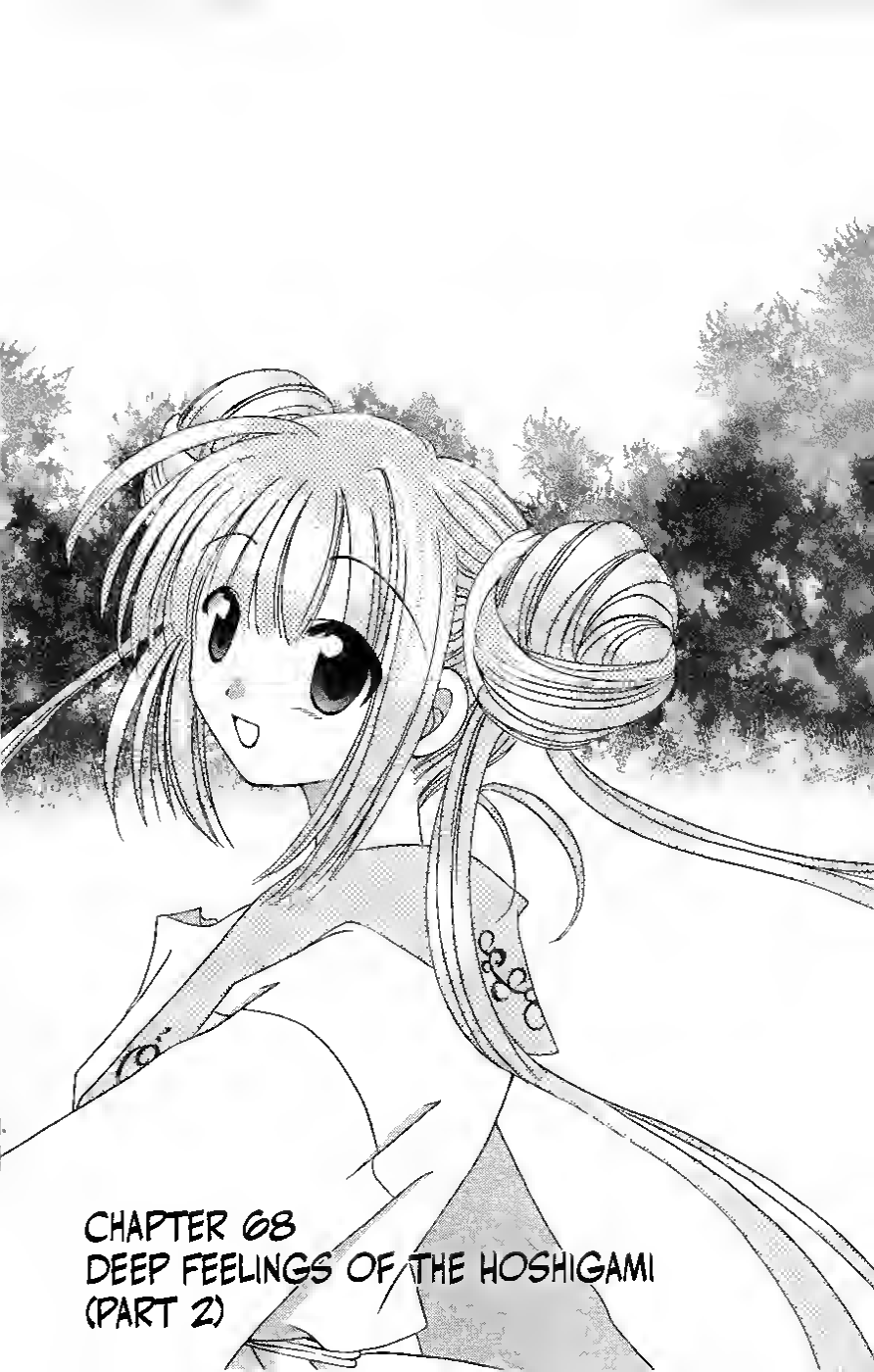
HEY, YOU.

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY!!
LET'S GO!!

SO SHE WAS...

...TOYING WITH ME.





CHAPTER 68
DEEP FEELINGS OF THE HOSHIGAMI (PART 2)

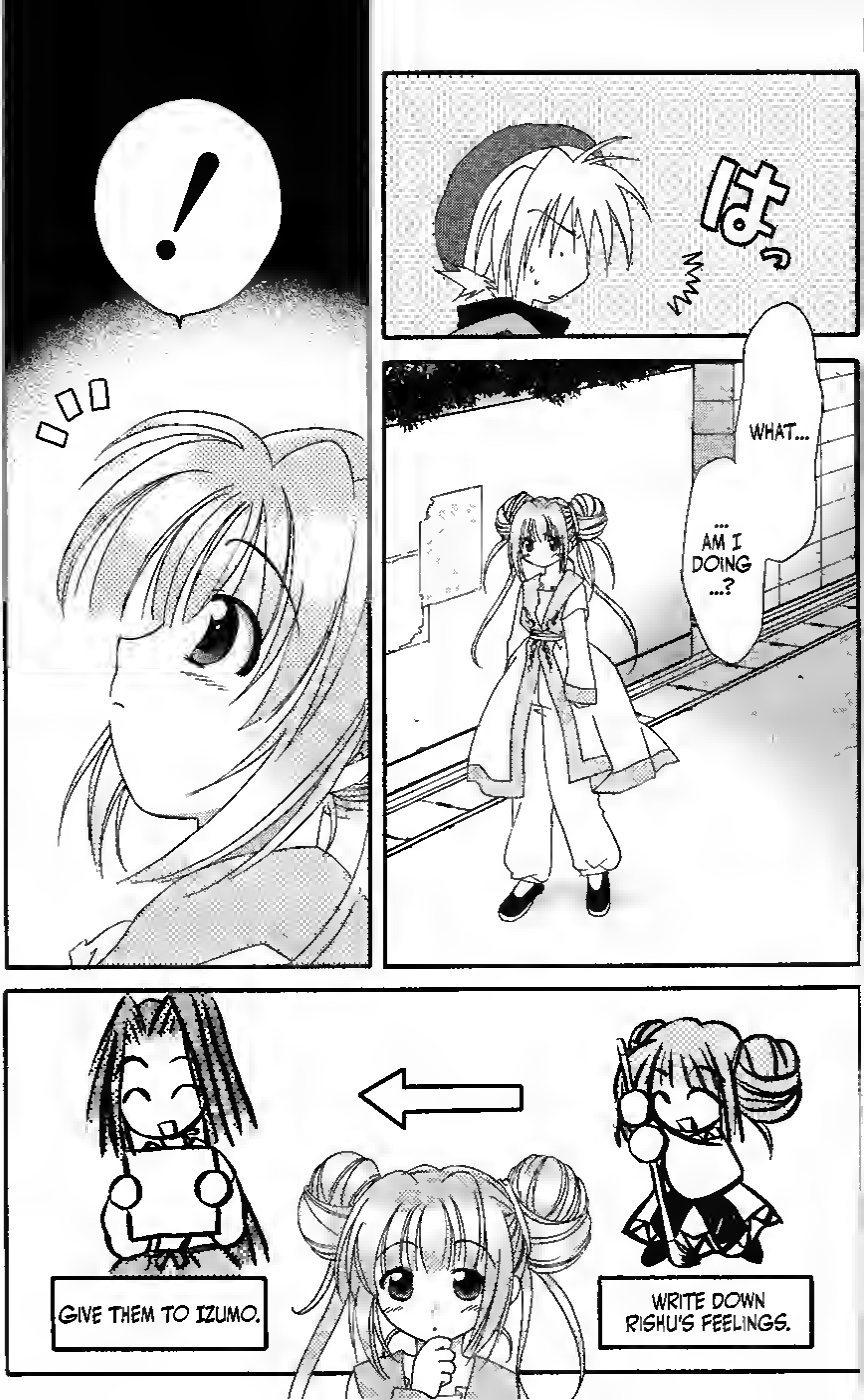
トボトボ
WELL, WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM LIKE THAT.
……
……
はぁ…

FOR NOW, WE'LL GO SOMEWHERE THEY WON'T FIND US.
RISHU, HIDE IN HERE--
WHAT THE ...?!
↑RISHU'S HAND.
H--
HEY!!
WHAT'S THAT FOR?!
CALM DOWN A LITTLE, WILL YA?!!

イラッ
はぁ…
はぁ…
ぶん、
ぶん、
……
RISHU!!
!
……
CALM DOWN A SEC...
...AND JUST HEAR ME OUT.

!
LET'S GO HOME ALREADY
THE LONGER WE DRAG THIS OUT, THE MORE TROUBLE WE'RE GOING TO BE IN!
REMEMBER YOUR PLACE!!
むっ

WHA...?
ドキ
……
くるっ
たたた
……


!
はっ
WHAT...
...AM I DOING...?
GIVE THEM TO IZUMO.
WRITE DOWN RISHU'S FEELINGS.

HEEY, WHERE ARE YOOUU?
RISHUU!
REALLY!!
WHERE'D SHE GO?!
REALLY!!
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
MAYBE I SHOULD TELL LADY GETTEN.
SIIIIIGH.♡

EX... CUSE ME.
MMM. IF YOU'RE JAPANESE, YOU CAN'T HELP BUT TO LOVE TEA!!
I'M TRYING TO WORK HERE, AND IT'S KIND OF...
...ANNOYING...
...IF YOU JUST SIT THERE LIKE THAT.
WORK? WHAT WORK? WHY WOULD YOU WORK IF NO ONE'S AROUND?
EVEN IF NO ONE IS HERE, THERE'S STILL WORK TO DO!!
THEN I'LL HELP YOU. HA HA!

⬆ IT'S HER NATURE TO TEASE.

?
SURE, NO PROBLEM.
I CAN'T SIT HERE ALL DAY AND KEEP YOU COMPANY.
JUST TELL ME WHY YOU'RE HERE.
ENOUGH SMALL TALK.
HUH?
I'M HERE BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING INTERESTING IS DEVELOPING.

OOF
LADY GETTEN!! I'M SO SORRY!!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT!!
WHY I LOOK LIKE THIS AND WHY RISHU'S DISAPPEARED-- IT'S ALL MY FAULT.
PLEASE DON'T YELL AT RISHU.
.....?
KOHON...
YOU'RE BIG.
HUH?
SEE! LOOK, MASTER TASUKE!!
KOHON'S EN-LARGED!!

AMAZING! AMAZING!
HOW DID YOU GET SO--OH, IT WAS MISS KIRYUU, WASN'T IT?!!
UH...
WOW, SO YOU CAN GET BIG THEN.
THAT'S INCREDIBLE. I'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE.
THAT IS...
GASP! はっ
YOU MUSTN'T, KOHON!!
I MUST PUNISH YOU LATER!!
Y-YES.
OOH, THAT'S RIGHT!!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE HAVE TO FIND RISHU!
HEY, KID.
RISHUU!

UMM, I WAS WONDERING, IF LADY GETTEN AND RISHU DID SOMETHING SELFISH...
...WOULD YOU FORGIVE THEM?
OF COURSE.
THAT SO...

ポツ
ハッ！

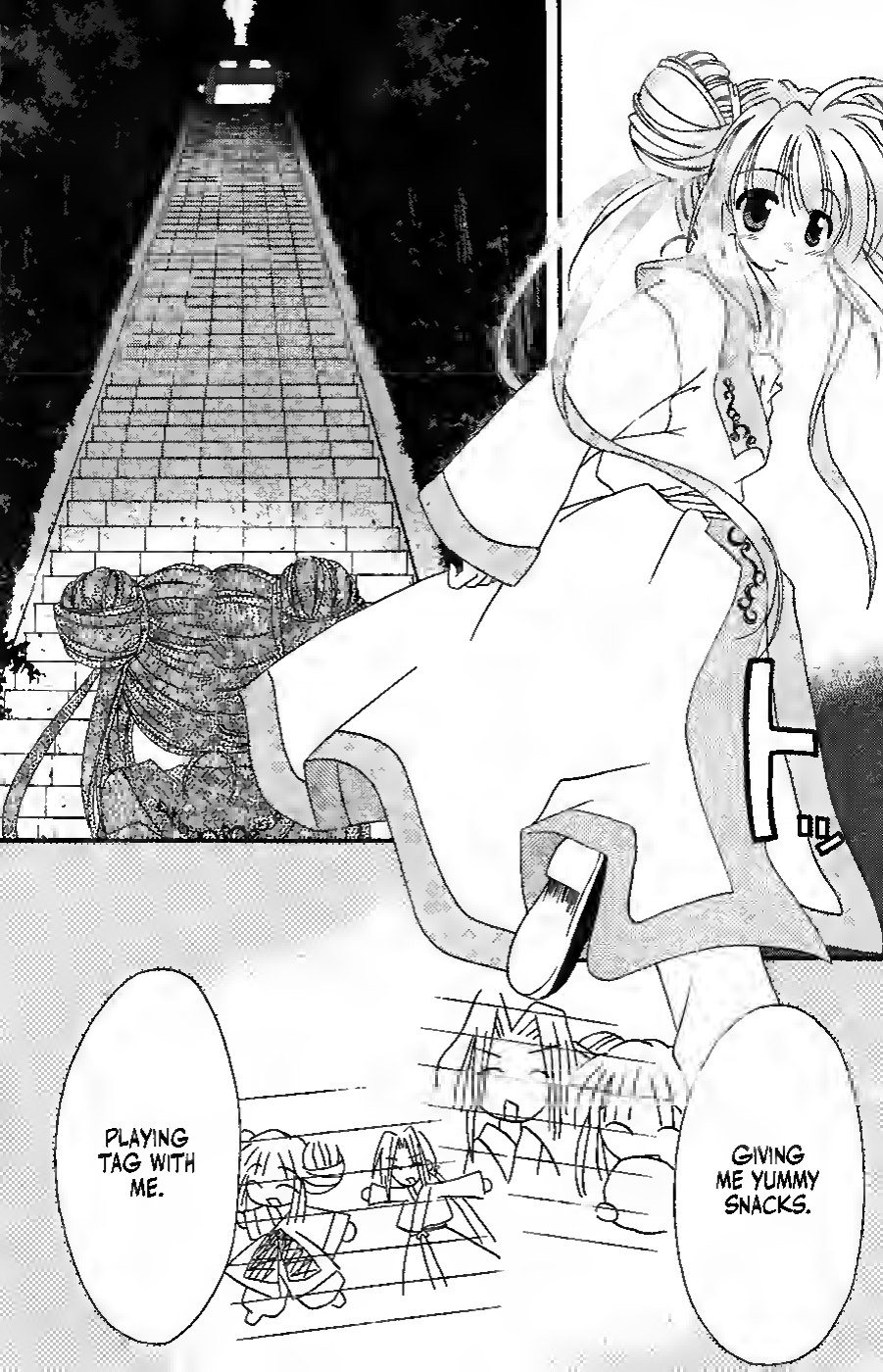
LADY GETTEN?
.....
OH!
DID RISHU TELL YOU WHERE SHE IS?!
IT'S NOT THAT.
IT'S NOT THAT.... BUT...
...HER EMOTIONS ARE OVER-FLOWING...
...AND I CAN SENSE THEM.

ギュっ
10月
RISHU...

...SHAO?
WHAT?
..MASTER TASUKE.
LET'S GO HOME...
...IS RISHU... ALL RIGHT.

PLEASE GO HOME ALREADY!!
I CANNOT WORK WITH YOU HERE!
WHAAAT? HEY!
JUST A MINUTE, ARE YOU TRYING TO KICK ME OUT?
HMM?
に

WHAT?
WHAT IS THIS?
NOTE
LIM...
HEY WAIT!!
.....?

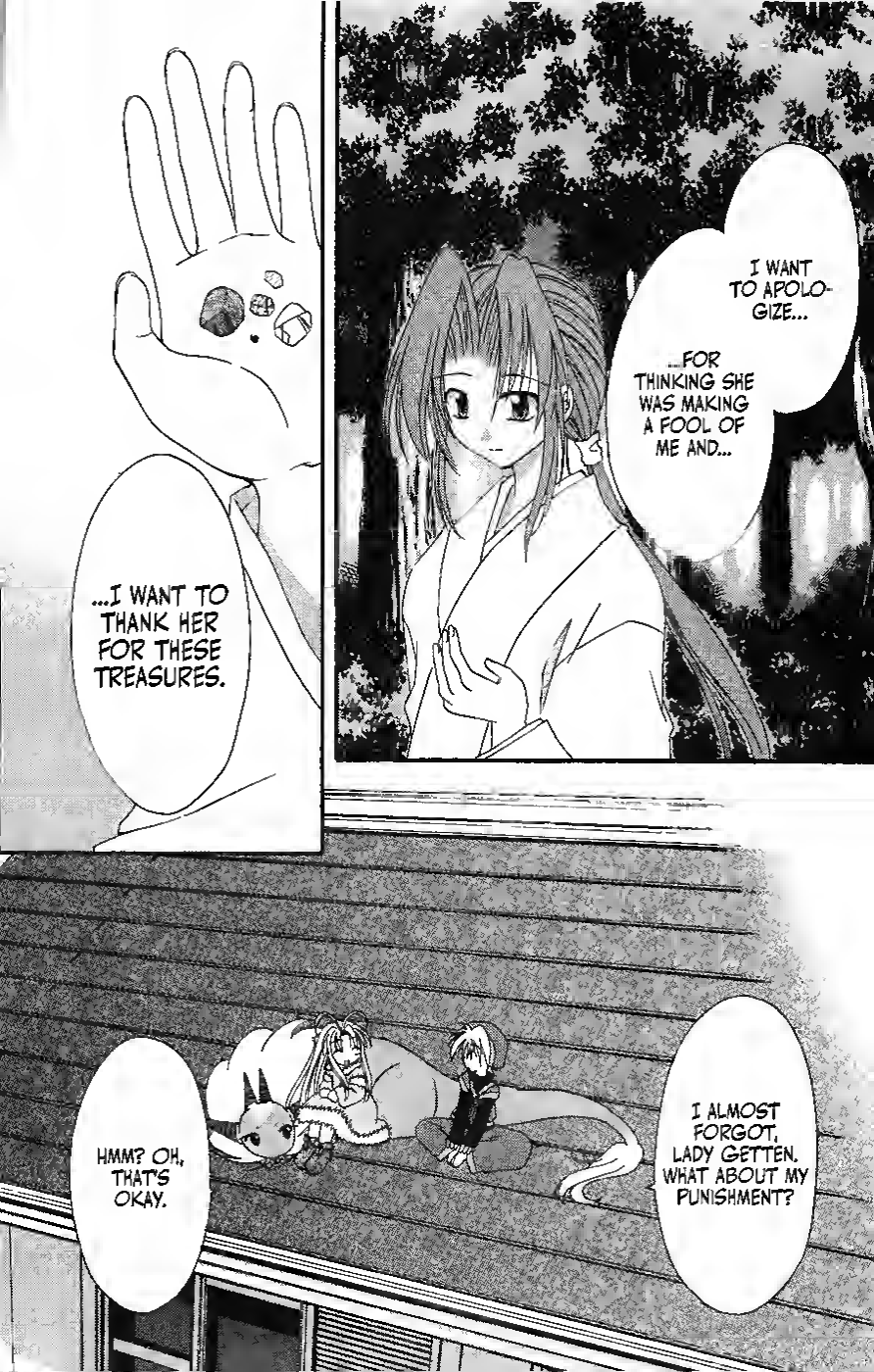

PLAYING TAG WITH ME.
GIVING ME YUMMY SNACKS.

...BUT...
OOH, MASTER TAA, WELCOME HOOME.
NO, SHAO SAID WE SHOULD WAIT FOR HER AT HOME
MY LIEGE, HAVE YOU SEEN RISHU?
THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS THAT...
...MAKE RISHU VERY HAPPY, BUT...

...IT'S THE THOUGHT-FULNESS BEHIND WHAT YOU DO...
...THAT MAKES ME THE HAPPIEST.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU BECAUSE YOU DON'T SEEM TO FEEL WELL.
IF YOU ARE WELL, THEN RISHU IS ALWAYS WELL.
WHEN YOU ARE HAPPY, RISHU IS REALLY HAPPY.
THAT'S WHY THERE WAS SOMETHING I HAD TO LET YOU KNOW.

THERE IS...
...A LOT OF GOOD...
...IN YOU TOO, MISTHER IZUMO.
...!!!
AAWW...
HOW SWEEET. THAT'S SO CUUTE.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE WROTE, BUT...

DID IT MAKE YOU CRY?
SO WHAT IF IT DID?
MAYBE IT'S ALL RIGHT FOR ME TO CRY.
WHEN YOU GO HOME...
...WOULD YOU PLEASE DELIVER A MESSAGE TO RISHU FOR ME?
TELL HER I'LL BE WAITING FOR HER WITH THE MOST DELICIOUS JAPANESE SWEETS SHE'S EVER HAD...
...AND TO PLEASE COME VISIT ME AGAIN. WILL YOU TELL HER?


I WANT TO APOLO-GIZE...
...FOR THINKING SHE WAS MAKING A FOOL OF ME AND...
...I WANT TO THANK HER FOR THESE TREASURES.
I ALMOST FORGOT, LADY GETTEN. WHAT ABOUT MY PUNISHMENT?
HMM? OH, THAT'S OKAY.

ISN'T THIS PLACE SO...
...WONDERFULLY WARM AND SUNSHINY?
YES...?
WHAT?!
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT...
...WE SHOULD GO GET RISHU SOON.
UH...
YEAH!
GODS...
...I AM A PRIDEFUL AND FOOLISH MAN.

...WAS THAT I THOUGHT I WAS BETTER THAN OTHER PEOPLE!
OH.
HOWEVER, I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT WHAT WAS MOST FOOLISH OF ME...
I DON'T THINK I AM ANY LESS THAN THEM, BUT...
IT'S JUST THAT...
RISHUU!

WOOW! LOOK AT YOU RISHU.
YOU'RE SOO CUUTE!
RISHU ...
UMM... ARE YOU FEELING OKAY?
WHAT AM I SAYING?
OH NO, THAT'S...
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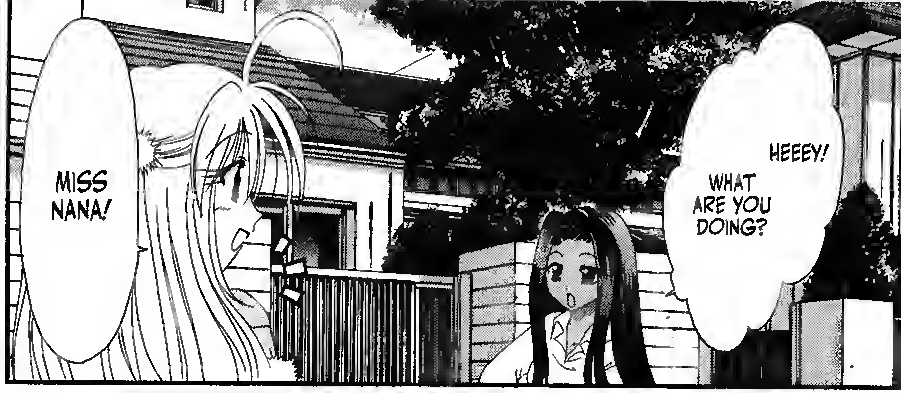
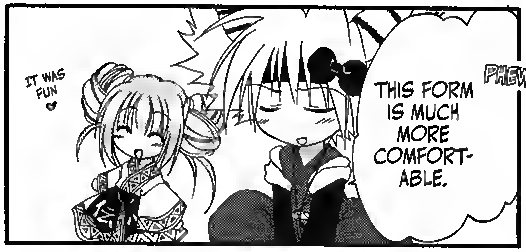
ドキン



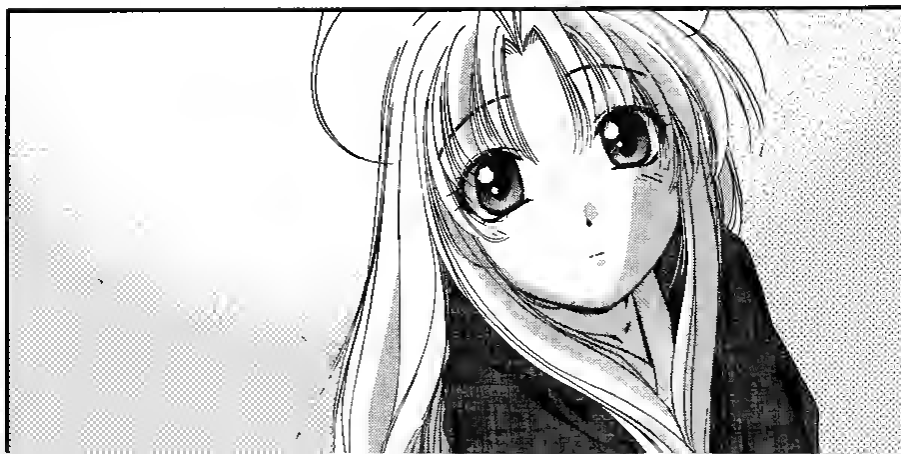
WHAT MADE ME HAPPY WAS...

...JUST THE FACT THAT I WAS NOT ALONE.

SUPERIOR OR INFERIOR ASIDE, BEING ALONE IS LONELY.

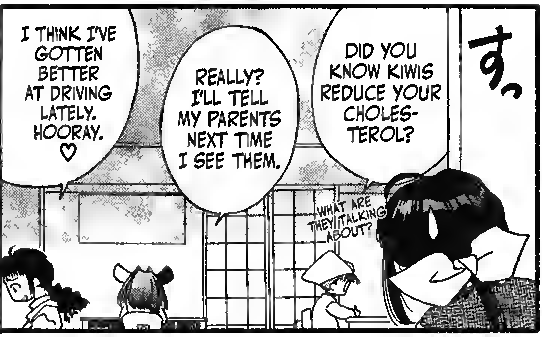


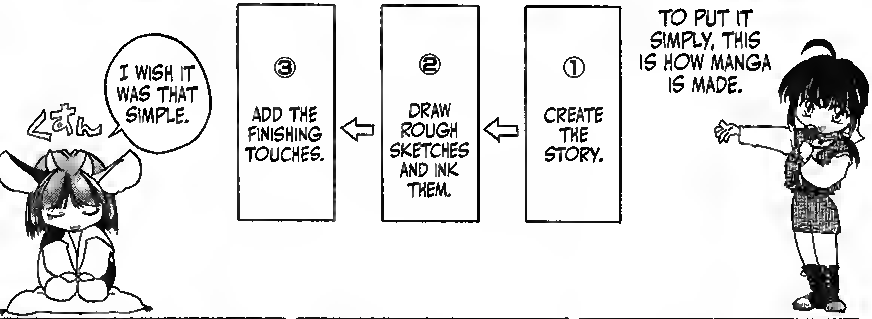
MAMOTTE SHUGOGETTEN 10 THE END



SHOUKO REPORTS

HOW MANGA GETS DONE!!


I THINK I'VE GOTTEN BETTER AT DRIVING LATELY. HOORAY. ♡
REALLY? I'LL TELL MY PARENTS NEXT TIME I SEE THEM.
DID YOU KNOW KIWIS REDUCE YOUR CHOLES-TEROL?
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?


TO PUT IT SIMPLY, THIS IS HOW MANGA IS MADE.
① CREATE THE STORY.
② DRAW ROUGH SKETCHES AND INK THEM.
③ ADD THE FINISHING TOUCHES.
I WISH IT WAS THAT SIMPLE.

NOT ONLY IS IT HARD, BUT...
...I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT IT. SO SOMETIMES I GO TO THE BEACH AT NIGHT AND RUN UNTIL I'M EXHAUSTED.
BUT CREATING STORIES IS REALLY FUN
MINENE SPEAKS.

うおおお

I LAUGH WHEN THEY LAUGH AND CRY WHEN THEY CRY.

IT'S LIKE EMOTIONAL OSMOSIS--WHEN I DRAW IT, I FEEL IT.

こうらうろうろうろうろうろに

ろーん

MY LITTLE BROTHER THINKS IT'S CREEPY

MINENE SPEAKS AGAIN

HUH...?

OH NO, IT'S A GROUP EFFORT. TASUKE AND SHAO AND EVERYONE WORK IT OUT WITH ME.

② DRAW ROUGH SKETCHES AND INK THEM.

DO YOU ALWAYS DO THE SKETCHING AND INKING YOURSELF?

WOW, THAT *IS* A ROUGH SKETCH, ISN'T IT?

BUT I'M LUCKY. IT MAKES ME HAPPY TO KNOW THAT I HAVE PEOPLE WHO WILL TELL ME WHEN SOMETHING ISN'T GOOD.

SOMETIMES MY ASSISTANTS ARE STRICT.

MINENE, THIS FACE IS ALL DISTORTED.

な~

③ ADD THE FINISHING TOUCHES.

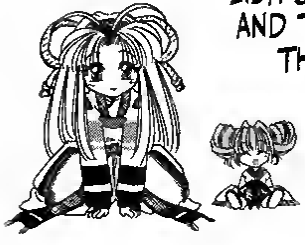
YEP. THAT'S WHY IT'S THE MOST FUN PART.

THAT'S WHEN YOUR ASSISTANTS COME IN, RIGHT?

WE USED TO WORK TOGETHER CRAMMED AROUND ONE TABLE.

ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO TO CREATE *MAMOTTE SHUGOGETTEN!* ♪

I'D LIKE TO THANK THE PEOPLE I'M INDEBTED TO--MY PARENTS, MY YOUNGER BROTHER, MY EDITOR, IIDA-SAN, MY ASSISTANTS, MY FAMILY, AND THEN YOU, MY READERS--FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART...



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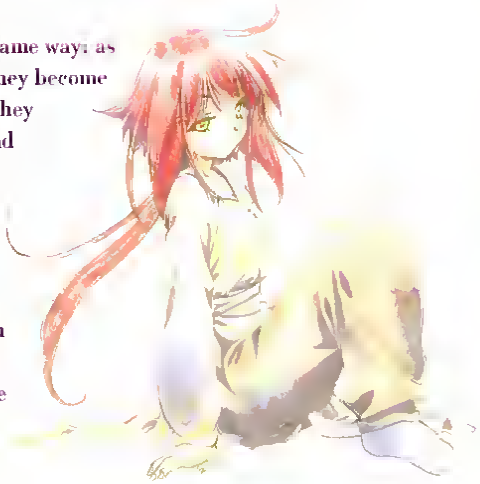
All of Kiryuu's jobs end the same way: as she challenges her masters, they become increasingly unhappy, until they decide they've had enough and dismiss her.

Until now. Tasuke and his sister actually like her! And they *want* her to stay. Is this the happily ever after Kiryuu always dreamed of? Or will she face her own unspeakable challenge if she decides to stick around?



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